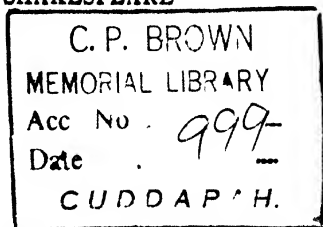




# THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

By  
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Introduction and Notes by  
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## INTRODUCTION.

### **Date of the Play :**

Francis Meres Was a graduate of Cambridge, and was rector of Wing in Rutland from 1602 to 1647. During his stay in London, he was closely associated with people who were interested in and informed about the theatre. Though he never approved of plays that encouraged immoral conduct, he had no puritanical aversion for the theatre. His *Palladis Tamia : Wits Treasury* was published in the autumn of 1598. He mentions six of Shakespeare's comedies and six of his tragedies. Though the list does not pretend to contain all the plays of Shakespeare written by them, *The Merchant of Venice* finds a place in it. Meres' book is one of the earliest and the most valuable guide to determine the chronology of Shakespeare's work. The mention of the present play only proves that it could not have been composed later than 1598.

Internal evidence—manipulation of a complex plot, masterly characterisation, less percentage of rhymed lines, etc.,—shows that it could not belong to that period of early plays, 1592-93. Dowden feels that the 'supposed date' of our play is 1594, but the 'earliest allusion' to it is 1598, and adds, in a foot-note, that it may be lookt-on as fairly certain. But he is willing to concede that it may have been written in 1596. Verity says, that 'there are several



pieces of evidence which point to 1596,' and gives the following :

i) Shylock's speeches in the earlier part of the Trial scene present two or three similarities to passages in Silvan's *Orator*, the English version of which appeared in 1596.

ii) The opening of the last Act of *The Merchant of Venice* is imitated clearly in a play entitled *Wily Beguiled* believed to have been written about 1596-7.

Dowden, as has already been mentioned, says, "Perhaps 1596 is likely a date as we can fix upon". Verity says, "let us have one date, and let that date be 1596." It is likely that it is published as a Quarto edition (s) in 1600.

### **The Sources of the play :**

Shakespeare never took the trouble of inventing a story. The greatest of the playwrights is the worst of borrowers. If it is remembered that he is not incapable of invention, and exigencies and the milieu were more responsible than inability to invent, the following reasons may be given : (a) The Renaissance came to England nearly a century later than it did to the other countries of the world. When it came, it came from Italy or through France from Italy and brought with it a multitude of ancient and foreign influences. With so much opulence before them, the English became shamefully conscious of the indigence of their literature. For the benefit of the common mass, and the many noblemen who knew no other language but their own, scholars set out to translate as many of the best books as possible. Tales from Italy were freely circulated and were known to nearly all people. So it would be easy to capture their attention, if a known story is dramatized and put on boards. (b) The immediate prede-

cessors of Shakespeare made it a fashion to dramatize known stories. (c) The demand for plays were great and the rivals were many. So Shakespeare had no option but to toe the line with them. (d) A borrowed story gave the playwright scope to pay great attention to poetry and characterization which is one of the greatest merits of Shakespeare. (e) His genius ran with flash and flourish in the treatment of incident and delineation of character and did not care to move in the direction of creation of incident. *The Merchant of Venice* is good illustration to show what the playwright could do with a known story.

The Bond-story and the casket-story had been in existence from ancient times. It is probable that an earlier playwright attempted to fuse them together. It is noted by many a critic that the immediate source for the Bond story was a tale contained in an Italian collection of stories called *Il Pecorone* (The Dunce) by Ser Giovanni Fiorentino. (Compiled in 1378, Published in 1558). The first story of the fourth day (*Il Pecorone* was written after the manner of Boccaccio's Decameron) tells how Giannetto, living with his godfather Ansaldo, a wealthy merchant of Venice, was persuaded to ask permission to visit Alexandria. Ansaldo provided a splendid ship and merchandise merely to gratify Giannetto's wish, not in hope of gain. Putting in at the port of Belmonte, the young man encounters the beautiful and capricious widow who invites wealthy visitors to share her bed, on condition that they will forfeit their possessions if they fail to enjoy her. Her victims are given a drugged wine that leaves the lady free to take possession of the goods of her sleeping guest. Twice Giannetto visits her and twice he loses everything. Yet Ansaldo furnishes him for a third venture, having, however, to borrow ten thousand ducats from a Jew, which he

must repay by the feast of ST. John or forfeit a pound of his flesh. The third time Giannetto, warned by the lady's maid not to drink, embraced the lady as his wife and became her husband. Enjoying his new state Giannetto forgets his godfather's plight, till a procession on St. John's Day reminded him of the bargain of the Jew. Provided with a hundred thousand ducats by his wife, Giannetto hastens to Venice only to find that the Jew insists on having Ansaldo's flesh. Meantime, however, the lady from Belmonte has come secretly to Venice, and disguised as a lawyer she challenges the Jew, who has refused her offers of money to take the flesh without spilling blood. He sees he is defeated, but his offer to take the money is now rejected, and he tears up the bond in his fury. Giannetto offers the lawyer the hundred thousand ducats: this, however, is declined and he has to give his ring instead. Once more at Belmonte all is explained and to complete the general happiness Ansaldo marries the damsel who had warned Giannetto against the doctored wine. (*Shakespeare* by Peter Alexander.)

'To share her bed' story is strong a diet for the queary moral stomach of the English. It is 'too Italian' for Willian Alleys, William Crawshaws and Stephen Gossons were prowling everywhere. The story must be altered, and altered to suit the tastes of the English. Shakespeare has made a superb job of it. If a rich and polished gem like *The Merchant* has come out of *Il Pocorone*, the story must have undergone not ecdysis but metamorphasis; the original is as crude as the caterpillar, but the Shakespearean touch has made it as lovely as a butterfly

What other elements have gone to bring about such a change remain to be examined. Shakespeare picked up the casket story from *Gesta Romanorum* as translated by

Richard Robinson. The story itself has a long antiquity and the *Gesta* must have got it from the mediæval romance *Barlaam and Josaphat* written in Greek by Joannes Damascenus. The *Gesta Romanorum* (The Deeds of the Romans) contains the version which Shakespeare used with changes. There a lost girl, by birth a king's daughter has to choose between three caskets to win the Emperor's son. 'The story now is changed: Apollo does nothing, but Daphne makes the choice'. But the inscriptions on the caskets in the *Gesta* provide matter and inspiration to Shakespeare, with this difference that, the one on the golden is given to silver and vice versa, while that on the lead is Shakespeare's own.

"These two sources then", observes Verity, "...*Il Pecorone* for the Bond-story and the *Gesta Romanorum* for the Caskets-story..." are undoubted.

The story of Jessica-Lorenzo, and the figure of Shylock owe some thing to Abigail and her Christian lover, and her father Barabas the Jew, in Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta*. It owes somethings more to an Italian story... the Fourteenth Tale of Massuccio di Salerno of the 15th c. It is the story of a young gentleman of Messino who falls in love with the daughter of a rich Neapolitan miser. As the father kept his child perpetually shut up, the lover uses a fine stratagem. He pretends to set out on a long journey and deposits a number of valuable articles with the miser. Among other things, he leaves behind a female slave. She influences the mind of the miser's daughter in favour of her lord, and induces her to elope and to carry the wealth of her father.

One may hunt for sources, and find them too, but no one can reach the fount that inspires Shakespeare to effect marvellous changes and shape crude materials into

things of beauty which are a joy forever. "The originality of *The Merchant of Venice* lies not in the material but in the treatment of the material." (Verity) Two superb characters (Portia and Shylock), intense dramatic effects, nervous poetry, humour, deft manipulation of incidents—these have no 'sources'.

#### **Four Strands of the pattern :**

Matter is one thing, but manner is another. Given the same matter, the manner of no two authors will be the same, and the manner reveals the artist. Wood and implements may be the same, but an expert cabinet-maker makes a thing of superb finesse, whereas an ordinary carpenter produces a crude article of furniture. A picture directed by Sridhar, Shantaram, or Adurti will any day be superior to the one directed by others though the material may be the same.

The indebtedness of Shakespeare is always mentioned in dealing with any of his plays. But no one intends any slight to him. It is mentioned only to emphasise the excellence of his art and genius, to pay tribute to the craftsmanship of the playwright, to offer homage to his shaping intellect which produce a marvel out of the ordinary, a thing of beauty out of the common place.

The Bond-story and the casket-story are two different stories coming from two different sources, and yet Shakespeare has made them the warp and woof of *the Merchant of Venice*. Lamb considered that the casket-story is unnecessary and left it in the *Tales from Shakespeare*. Admittedly the Bond-story is chief part of the play. But this is deftly interwoven with the casket-story. The essence of the former is the escape of Antonio from the revenge of Shylock, and of the latter, Bassanio's winning

the hand of Portia. It is the latter that starts the Bond-story. It is to win her that Bassanio needed money, and for his sake Antonio is forced to borrow. "She is the cause," Verity observes "indirectly and involuntarily of Antonio's suffering, and directly of his preservation." Thus the casket-story becomes the cause, and the Bond-story the sequel.

With these are connected the minor stories of Lorenzo and Jessica, and of the rings. While the main stories are the warp and woof, these two are like horizontal and vertical stripes that add beauty to the fabric and become an intrinsic part of it.

The Jessica-Lorenzo story throws more light on the character of Shylock. It lays bare his avarice and love of money which effaces fatherly love, and affords us a glimpse of the Jew's domestic life. The elopement of his daughter with a Christian also serves as a strong motive which makes Shylock adamant. Incidentally, it makes Portia's words significant. "The brain may devise laws for the blood: but a hot temper leaps o'er a cold decree". In the case of Portia the will of a living daughter is curbed by the will of a dead father, but in the case of Jessica, the will of a living father is restrained by the will of a living father who is passionately attached to his bags. The psychological truth is that the very restraint is an inducement and spur to break it. Portia abides by her father's will and is rewarded with unsullied happiness: Jessica leaps over a cold decree, and "I have a father you a daughter; lost." Since the play is a comedy and all's well that ends well, Jessica is rewarded with a faithful husband, but her felicity is not complete for her love cost her, her faith and father.

Finally comes the story of the rings which rounds off the story. Antonio's rescue causes the loss of the ring, and so he becomes the means of reconciliation, though when all things are explained his intervention will have been superfluous.

"The meeting point of all four," Verity observes, "is the scene of Bassanio's choice of caskets. He quotes Moulton, "This scene (III, ii) is the climax of the Casket-story. It is connected with the catastrophe in the story of the Jew: Bassanio, at the moment of happiness learns that the friend through whom he has been able to contend for the prize (of Portia's hand) has forfeited his life to his foe as the price of liberality. The scene is connected with the Jessica story: for Jessica and her husband are the messengers who bring the sad tidings, and thus link together the bright and gloomy elements of the play. Finally, the Episode of the Rings, which is to occupy the end of the drama, has its foundation in this scene, in the exchange of rings which are to be the source of such ironical perplexity." Without this Episode Portia's part in the rescue of Antonio will remain unexplained. So the scene becomes the dramatic's centre of the play.

### **The Story of the Play :**

Shylock, the Jew, lived at Venice. He became immensely rich by lending money at very high rates of interests to Christian merchants and exacted payment with great severity. While he amassed wealth, he also amassed the wrath and hatred of all men. Antonio, a young Christian merchant of Venice (The play is named after him) heartily detested him and often lent monies to persons in distress without interest. Besides, he always

abused Shylock when they met at the Exchange. "Suff'rance is the badge of all our tribe", and Shylock paid him mock courtesy, but bore him inward grudge.

He lends money gratis and brings down  
The rate of usance here with us in Venice.  
If I can catch him once upon the hip,  
I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him.

Antonio was a very kind man and helped people when they came to him. He made a name for himself among all classes of Christians both for his charities and virtues. His dearest friend was a Venetian youth of noble birth and meagre resources. He lived beyond his means, and in all exigencies depended on Antonio, who never denied him anything. It seemed as if they had but one heart and one purse between them.

Bassanio one day came to him and told him that he wished to repair his fortunes by a wealthy marriage. Bassanio loved her deeply and she was the sole heiress to a large estate left by her father, who was recently dead. In her father's time, he used to visit their house, when

sometimes from her eyes

I did receive fair speechless messages :

Her name is Portia.

She lived in Belmont. He requested Antonio to give him three thousand ducats to furnish himself like a worthy suiter to such a rich lady. But Antonio had no ready money with him at that time, for all his ships were on the high seas. Therefore he asked Bassanio to

Try what my credit can in Venice do.

Bassanio sought the help of Shylock. The Jew thought



that he could catch Antonio upon the hip and feed fat the ancient grudge. When the Merchant went to him, he mocked at him thus :

Fair Sir, you spit on me on Wednesday last :  
You spurn'd me such a day : another time  
You call'd me dog : and for these courtesies  
I'll lend you thus much moneys'?

When Antonio told him, "I am as like to call thee so again," he pretended to be humble and said that he would like to be his friend, that he would lend money without interest provided, 'in a merry sport', if he signed a bond. If he failed to pay the amount by a stipulated date, the forfeit should be

an equal pound  
Of your fair flesh, to be cut off and taken  
In what part of your body pleaseth me.

Antonio agreed to sign such a bond and, in spite of Bassanio's protests against taking so great a risk, signed it.

Portia, the rich heiress of Belmont was reputed alike for wealth, beauty and intelligence. Bassanio now richly furnished himself with the money provided by his friend, and left for Belmont, and was attended by a gentleman called Gratiano. He might have received messages of love from her eyes and she would have preferred him to other suitors, but the affair was not simple.

Portia's father sealed her destiny in three caskets, gold, silver and lead. One of them contained her portrait and he who chooses the right casket had to be accepted by her. It was a gamble, and we are asked to believe that holy men like her father at their death have good inspi-

rations, and no man could ever choose the right casket, unless he truly loved her. Bassanio was lucky to have chosen the right casket precisely because he truly loved her and Portia felt so supremely happy that she prayed to make her happiness less, 'for fear I surfeit'.

Bassanio plainly told her that blue blood was his only property and that he has no wealth at all. She modestly replied that she were a thousand times fairer than she was to deserve such a noble and handsome person. She said that she was an inexperienced girl and would like to be governed by him "Myself and what is mine to you and yours is now converted .. and now this house, these servants, and myself, are yours, my lord; I give them with this ring". and presented him a ring. Bassanio was too overwhelmed with gratitude to adequately express it and vowed that he would never part with the ring. Gratiano, the gentleman waiting on him, fell in love with Nerissa, the waiting gentlewoman of Portia, and with their permission they agreed to become man and wife. Nerissa gave him a ring and he too, like his masters promised never to part with it.

The happiness of the lovers suddenly was clouded by a letter brought by a messenger to Bassanio. On reading it, he grew so deadly pale that Portia thought that someone very near and dear must have died. Bassanio told her that the most unpleasant words had blotted the paper. He had already told her that he had no wealth, but now he said he should have told her that he was less than nothing. He related to her the story of his friend and the bond signed by him. He read out the letter which brought the sad news that the bond was forfeited to the Jew; "I could wish to see you at my death; not withstanding, use your

pleasure; if your love for me do not persuade you to come, let not my letter".

Portia at once said that he would have gold to pay the money twenty times over. She said that they should immediately be married so that he could enjoy a legal right to all her wealth. Portia and Bassanio, Nerissa and Gratiano were quickly married, and the two friends hurriedly set out to Venice. Antonio was then already in prison, and the Jew spurned Bassanio's offer of gold. He insisted on having a pound of Antonio's flesh. A day was fixed for trial before the Duke of Venice and Bassanio awaited the verdict in dreadful suspense.

Though she gave a cheery farewell to Bassanio, she felt that things might go very bad for Antonio. She resolved to go to Venice and defend him. She had a relation in a lawyer by name Bellario. She sent him a letter explaining the case of Antonio and sought his advice and a lawyer's dress. When her messenger came back, he brought with him Ballario's advice and the equipment necessary for a lawyer. He also brought a letter of introduction to the Duke of Venice.

Portia dressed herself like a lawyer and made Nerissa put on the guise a lawyer's clerk. He reached Venice on the day of trial. She entered the court a few minutes after the trial commenced and presented the Duke the letter of introduction Bellario had sent. It appers that the Duke had sent for Bellario. (IV i 105-7). Bellario wrote that he was prevented form coming owing to sickness and that the young doctor, Balthasar (he gave that name to Portia) would conduct the case. The Duke wondered whether such a young man would be able to conduct so difficult a case.

The trial began. Portia looked round the court. She found the Jew, and Bassanio who was standing near Antonio. She turned to Shylock and, telling him that the Venetian law allows him, to claim the forfeiture of the bond, she spoke to him, of the greatness of mercy :

The quality of mercy is not strain'd,  
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven  
Upon the place beneath : it is twice blessed ;  
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes.

She told him that it is an attribute of God that, because we pray for divine mercy, it behoved us to show mercy to a fellow human being. But Shylock was unmoved. She asked him whether Antonio was not able to pay the money. Bassanio offered to pay three thousand ducats, many times over. But when Shylock refused to accept money, he turned to Portia and requested her to twist the law in favour of Antonio. She gravely observed that established laws should never be altered. Shylock was pleased to hear such words and exclaimed, "A Daniel is come to judgement!"

Portia then desired to have a look into the bond. She observed that the bond was forfeited and that the Jew could claim his pound of flesh, to be by him cut off nearest Antonio's heart. She once more appealed to him to show mercy and bid her tear the bond. Shylock told her that there was no power in the tongue of man to alter him. She asked Antonio to prepare his bosom for Shylock's knife. He bade farewell to Bassanio and requested him to commend him to his wife. Bassanio said that he would sacrifice all he had including his wife to deliver him from that devil of a Jew. Portia observed that his wife would give him little thanks, if she were by. Gratiano

said that he wished his young wife to be in heaven to entreat some power there to change the Jew.

Shylock protested against waste of time and desired that the sentence be passed at once. Portia asked if the scales were ready to weigh the flesh, and asked the Jew to have a surgeon by lest Antonio should bleed. But he replied that such a provision was not made in the bond. Then she said, "a pound of Antonio's flesh is thine. The law allows it, and the court awards it. And you may cut this flesh from off his breast. The law allows it, and the court awards it." Shylock was in raptures and asked Antonio to be prepared.

Now came the dramatic turn off events. "Tarry a little, Jew," said Portia, "there is something else. This bond gives you no drop of blood; the words expressly are 'a pound of flesh'. If in cutting off the pound of flesh you shed one drop of Christian blood, your lands and goods are by the law to be confiscated to the state of Venice." The whole court which had been in dithering and awful suspense and silence all the while resounded with applause for the wonderful discovery made by the young lawyer that flesh and not blood was mentioned in the bond. Gratiano expressed the very words of Shylock to mock him by saying, "a Daniel is come to judgement".

Shylock realised that he was defeated, and hence said that he was ready to accept the money. Bassanio was overjoyed and happily offered it, but Portia prevented him from giving it by saying that the Jew would have nothing but the penalty. Portia told the Jew that by the laws of Venice, his wealth was forfeited to the state since he conspired against the life of one of its citizens and that his life was at the mercy of the Duke.

The Duke then said that Shylock should know Christian charity and that, therefore, he would spare his life, even before he begged for it. He added that half of his property should go to the state and half to Antonio. Antonio then said that he would be prepared to forego his share, provided the Jew would sign a bond giving it to his only daughter who had recently married a Christian named Lorenzo a friend of the merchant. Shylock said, "I am ill, let me go home; send the deed after me and I will sign it." The Duke permitted him to go and said that if he accepted Christianity, the other half would be given to him.

Antonio released and the court dismissed, the Duke invited the young lawyer to dine with him. But Portia, anxious to return to Belmont ere her husband, declined the invitation politely, saying that she had to go away directly. The Duke was sorry the lawyer could not stay, and advised Antonio to reward lawyer properly, for he owed his life to him.

After the Duke and the Senate left the court hall Bassanio and Antonio offered him the three thousand ducats due unto the Jew. She refused to accept the amount, but when Bassanio further pressed her, she requested him to give his gloves. When he removed them and offered them, she saw the ring presented by her, and requested him to give that ring. Bassanio was distressed that she should have asked his wife's gift which he had vowed never to part with. He said he would present her the most precious ring in Venice and find it out by proclamation. Portia pretended to be offended and said, "You teach me, Sir, how a beggar should be answered and left the place at once". Antonio asked him to weigh the service done by the lawyer and his wife's displeasure,

and make a present of it. Bassanio had to yield to his friend's request, lest he should be considered ungrateful. So he sent the ring after her, and Gratiano who took it had to part with his to the lawyer's clerk (Nerissa). The two women decided to have a hearty laugh over the rings by teasing their husbands

Portia and Nerissa had time enough to remove their disguise and compose themselves before Antonio and Bassanio arrived. Bassanio introduced Antonio to Portia and briefly explained to her how they were saved. Ere long they heard Gratiano and Nerissa quarelling with each other. On enquiry from Portia, Gratiano replied that the quarrel was about a petty gift given by Nerissa. Portia said that she had given a ring to her husband and that he would not part with it like Gratiano. Then she turned to Bassanio and asked him to show the ring. But Gratiano said, that his friend gave his ring to the young lawyer who had saved Antonio. Both the ladies pretended not to believe their husbands and accused them of giving it away to some other woman. Bassanio begged her to excuse him and explained to her earnestly how he came to part with it. Antonio felt sorry that he was the cause of all that unpleasantness. He swore that Bassanio was indeed faithful and would not have parted with the ring if the lawyer who saved him had not asked for it. Then Portia brought out the ring and asked Antonio to stand surety that Bassanio would never more part with it. Bassanio was greatly surprised to see that it was the same he presented to the lawyer. Then Portia explained to him how she played the part of the young lawyer. He and Antonio were still more surprised that her pluck, wit and courage saved the latter.

Portia once more bid Antonio's welcome, and gave him some letters which she got by accident. They contained the happy information that his ships were not lost and that they safely arrived in the harbour. The cup of their joy was now full. Gratiano too received his ring back, and all matters were explained at leisure.

### **Shylock :**

One of the marvels of Shakespeare is that even while he fixed his eyes on the stars, he firmly planted his feet in the sod. He was not only a playwright of extraordinary gifts of imagination, but also a theatre-manager with a stake in the fortunes of his company. He was more anxious to regain the pristine status of his family than to carve for himself a permanent riche. He did not run after Fame, but she came after him. He was too busy with mundane affairs to care for posterity, and yet genius always kept him aloft. For instance, Burbage wanted that the death of lady Macbeth should be announced more effectively and what was the result? - lo, out came the sublime passage, beginning with 'Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow'. His 'sources' were all there; they were not his exclusive property; they could have been utilised by any playwright. But did any one utilise them? Could he? Now that all the sources are known, with the performance of Shakespeare before them to boot, dare any playwright make another 'Merchant of Venice' and another marvel out of fantastic stories?

### **THE MILIEU :**

"The Elizabethan theatre", observes John Palmer, "reflects the life and mind of the nation and, when Shakespeare sat down to write 'The Merchant of Venice'



in 1594, antisemitism was in fashion. The fashion itself owed something to Marlowe's 'The Jew of Malta' and Barabas, its protagonist. Other dramatists were not slow to exploit the theme, though with doubtful success. The fashion was given a new lease of life with the trial and death of Roderigo Lopez, a Jew of Portugese origin, physician to many notable persons including the Queen herself. He was charged with conspiring against the Queen. The Earl of Essex engineered the case, and was himself one of the judges. Poor Lopez, found guilty of an offence he never committed, was quartered at Tyburn. The trial of Lopez created such an interest in Jewry that Marlowe's play was revived some twenty times between May and December 1594.

It was at such a time that Shakespeare set himself the task of giving the nation another Jewish play. In parenthesis, it may be noted that there is nothing more exciting than Shylock in 'The Merchant of Venice'. (The play is called after Antonio because he is the source and center of the play. The battle of the Bond-story, observes Verity, is fought round him, and it is his generosity that starts the casket story) J. R. Brown quotes *The Times* (October 17, 1927): the part of Shylock ... (wrapped) in the mystery of a thousand interpretations ...". By the time Shakespeare began to write, the Lopez episode had become a burning topic of debate in taverns and in enlightened informal gatherings. The baseless charge and the monstrosity of the punishment shocked every right-thinking person. So Shakespeare could not afford to create a monster of cupidity and vendetta; he had to humanize the Jew. It is reasonable, and in a way justifiable too, to give Shylock an opportunity to reveal his point of view. Who else can state it better than Shakespeare who became

each of his characters by turns? (In recent times Galsworthy took up the Jewish problem in *Loyalties*, and it serves to throw light on the temper of Christian mind where Jews are concerned. It registers little change even at this distance of time.)

#### ACTORS' SHYLOCK :

What was Shakespeare's conception of Shylock? No full account can ever be given, for dramatic characters come alive on the stage only through the actors who interpret them. Shaw insisted in conducting rehearsals to make sure that his characters were not misinterpreted, and changed actors, if they failed to live up to his conception. Antonio Chekov altered a few passages to suit the actors. The chief disadvantages from which the playwright suffers is that the characters become so and-so's Shylock, Hamlet, Lear, Harischandra, Girisam and cease to be the author's. If the dramatic personae are nearer the world of reality, three problems arise—what they really are, what the author conceives them to be, and how the actors interpret them. These problems are dramatized by Luigi Pirandello in his "Six Characters in Search of an Author".

How Shakespeare's company presented the play and interpreted Shylock is a question that should remain unanswered. By 1701 the play was actually called, in Lord Lansdowne's adaptation, as *The Jew of Venice* and Shylock was played by one Doggett, a famous 'low' comedian. Such an interpretation drew the protest of Nicholas Rowe, in 1709, who thought that the part of Shylock 'was design'd Tragically by the Author...(and that) it cannot agree either with the stile or character of Comedy'. In 1741 Charles Macklin played Shylock,

and Macklin's, Shylock too must have been comical for he was a noted comedian. But he was a character actor—he played Iago a few years later—and it may be surmised that his figure was not altogether a comic figure, for witnesses affirmed that he gave vent to the Jew's contrasted passions. From the performance of the actors, Hazlitt came to the conclusion that the Jew is "a decrepit old man, bent with age and ugly with mental deformity, with the venom in his heart congealed in the expression of his countenance, sullen, morose, gloomy, inflexible, brooding over an idea, that of his hatred, and fixed on one unalterable purpose, that of revenge". But the performance of Edward Kean in January 1814 displayed such a terrible energy that Hazlitt, who was in the audience on the first night, readily changed his opinion, and observed that Kean's Shylock "is much nearer the mark ...his Jew is more than half a Christian. Certainly, our sympathies are much oftener with him than with his enemies. He is honest in his vices; they are hypocrites in their virtues."

Sir Henry Irving's Shylock of November 1879 was a grand success, a personal success. His Shylock was a bloody minded monster who at the same time that he was a monster also drew the sympathy of his audience, for he became a mighty symbol of a persecuted race and the embodiment of vendetta for 'the indignities inflicted upon himself.' After Irving, the part was played by many famous actors including Sir John Gielgud but the play remained Shylock's play. The concept of Shylock might have varied from actor to actor, but after Kean, it could never more sink down to the level of low comedy.

## SHYLOCK, THE JEW :

The actors' Shylock does not give a complete picture of the Jew, neither does the critics'. In the case of a 'round' character like Shylock, it is inevitable that the search light can be focussed only on one half, may be a few features of the otherside are incidentally caught in the penumbral region. One half reveals Shylock the representative of a community that has been and still is subject to many an inhuman indignity down the ages, and other half Shylock the man. The two do not stand quite distinguished from each other, and so long as this point is remembered, it is convenient for the sake of clarity to look at one side at a time. If one looks for Shylock the Jew only, one will be tempted to agree with Hudson (of all critics!) who committed himself to the opinion that Shylock's was a great and noble nature. Critics who lean too far on this side have made him a moving, tragic figure and exclaimed 'O what a noble mind is here o'verthrown!' If one looks for Shylock the man only, one is likely to agree with the early opinion of Hazlitt—he had the courage to change his opinion after he saw Edward Kean's Shylock—that Shylock is the embodiment of the vengeance of a perverted race who is incapable of loving any thing except money, and even that is only next to his love of revenge. We should steer clear between the Scylla of Hudson and the Charybdis of Hazlitt.

Shylock is introduced in I iii and, on first seeing Antonio face to face—Bassanio already has acquainted him with the purpose of the visit—explains his motives in an aside,

How like a fawning publican he looks !  
*I hate him for he is a Christian.*

(That is reason enough for his hatred).

But more, for that in low simplicity  
 He lends out money gratis and brings down  
 The rate of usance here with *us* in Venice

[(A greivous charge, for the Jews live on 'usance. Shylock does not use so mean a word as 'usury'. Vide *Growth and structure of the English Language* by Otto Jespersen, pages 206-8).

If I can catch him once upon the hip,  
 I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him.  
*He hates our sacred nation.*

(Wild justice. The Jew hates the Christian because the latter hates the Jew).

Cursed be my tribe  
 If I forgive him !

(Italics ours)

He has already won a little of our sympathy.

The second outburst gains a lot more. Centuries of persecution and hatred made the Jews congealed specimens of vendetta. But they had to live in Christian kingdoms where the people treated them like social lepers, and 'sufferance hath become the badge of their tribe. Shylock speaks of the whole race when he pours forth a concoction of passion, and sarcasm and irrefutable logic:

Signior Antonio many a time and oft  
 In the Rialto you have rated me .

About my moneys and usances :  
Still have I borne it with a patient shrug,  
For suff'rance is the badge of all our tribe:  
You call me disbeliever, cut-throat dog,  
And spit upon my Jewish gaberdine,  
And for all use of that which is mine own.  
Go to, then: you come to me, and you say,  
'Shylock, we would have moneys': you say so;  
You, that did void your rheum upon my beard,  
And foot me as you spurn a stranger cur  
Over your threshold : money is your suit.  
What should I say to you? Should I not say,  
"Hath a dog money? is it possible  
A cur can lend three thousand ducats?" or  
Shall I bend low, and in a bondman's key,  
With a bated breath and whispering humbleness,  
Say this,—  
"Fair sir, you spit on me on Wednesday last:  
You spurn'd me such a day: another time  
You call'd me dog; and for these courtesies  
I'll lend you thus much moneys"?"

John Plamer comments : "That is perhaps the most remarkable speech in the play. It suggests for the first time on any stage that the Jew has a case. The Jew, moreover, puts the case with a deadly logic, sharpened by persecution to the finest edge, and with a passion which no amount of suff'rance can conceal." The Christians—Bassanio and Antonio—have no answer either for his passion or logic. Antonio (he may have the approval of intolerant Christians) demeans himself by saying :

"I am as like to call thee so again.  
To spit on thee again, to spun thee too."

He has come on a mission, and these words only serve to defeat his purpose. But Shylock is too cunning to allow passion to get the better of the motive of vengeance. He calls his deadly earnestness a merry sport and gets the bond signed by Antonio. For a man who lives by and for money, Shylock is taking too great risk to feed the ancient grudge. His plan will have failed, if Antonio's ships arrive in time.

Act III i also shows how the mind of Shylock the Jew works. He tells Salarino to warn Antonio; thrice he repeats 'let him look to his bond.'

*Salarino* : Why, I am sure, if he forfeit, thou wilt not take his flesh : What is that good for ?

*Shylock* . To bait fish withal : if it will feed nothing else it will feed my revenge. He that disgraced me, and hindered me half a million: laughed at my losses, mocked, at my gains, scorned my nation, thwarted my bargains heated mine enemies ; and what's his reason? I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes ? hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions ?...If you prick us, do we not bleed ? if you tickle us, do we not laugh ? if you poison us do we not die? and if you wrong us, shall we not revenge ? if we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that. If a Jew wrong a Christian, what is his humility ? revenge : if a Christian wrong a Jew, what should his sufferance be by Christian example? why, revenge. The villainy you teach me, I will execute; and it shall go hard but I will better the instrument.

Puissant words ! Powerful logic ! Cogent arguments ! Shylock's conquest of our sympathy is nearly complete. Few of us realise, in the words of Plamer, that 'what is

commonly received as Shylock's plea for tolerance is in reality his justification of an inhuman purpose.

### SHYLOCK, THE MAN :

The second half of III i wherein is displayed the alternate depression and jubilation of Shylock on hearing the elopement of Jessica and the ruin of Antonio respectively, gives us a peep into Shylock, the man. Shylock the congealed vengeance of a persecuted race, gradually swells himself into a villain out for the blood of Antonio. It is wrong to conclude that the elopement of his daughter and that with a Christian and friend of Antonio makes Shylock hard-hearted. When the news of Antonio's arrest reaches Belmont, Jessica assures Bassanio :

When I was with him, I have heard him swear  
To Tubal and to Chus, his countrymen,  
That he would rather have Antonio's flesh  
Than twenty times the value of the sum  
That he did owe him.

Before the scene closes his last words are : "I will have the heart of him (Antonio's), if he forfeit; for, were he out of Venice, I can make what merchandise I will." He wants to see that the Merchant of Venice is not merely out of Venice but out of the world, so that he can be the unrivalled monarch of the empire of 'usance'. He is seen once more before the trial. In III iii he is seen in a street when Antonio is led to the prison. He tells the gaoler :

This is the fool that lent out money gratis :  
Gaoler, look to him.



To Antonio who entreats him to hear him, he retorts

I have sworn an oath that I will have my bond  
Thou call'dst me dog before thou hadst a cause;  
But, since I am a dog, beware my fangs :

He leaves the place, and in the court also he stands on his bond, and proves to be "the most impenetrable cur That ever kept with men."

In the court, all appeals to mercy fall flat, and he insists on the condition of the bond. Shylock brings about his discomfiture by his very insistence. He digs his own pit and all unaware places in the hands of his enemies the weapons that ruin him in the end. To the Duke's appeal, his answer is :

If every ducat is six thousand ducats  
Were in six parts, and every part a ducat,  
I would not draw them; I would have my bond.

Balthazar (Portia) the lawyer increased his discomfiture by first pretending to lean on his side, and earning the compliment "A Daniel come to judgement! yea, a Daniell!" When the very bond on which he has relied so strongly proves to be the means of his ruin, he asks for his money. When not only money is denied but his property is confiscated and he is forced to accept Christianity, he walks out of the court saying, "I am not well: send the deed after me, and I will sign it." Actors who wanted to depict him as a tragic character, more sinned against than sinning, make him stab himself as he walks out. Some others take him home, make him knock and stand before empty house, the picture of pathos, as the curtain slowly falls down.

The pathos of Shylock would have been greater and our sympathy would have been absolute, if at least in domestic life he possessed sterling virtues. Of course, Jessica-Lorenzo story is not Shakespeare's. Abigail of Marlowe's *the Jew of Malta* and her Christian lovers may have suggested. This story or The Fourteenth Tale of Massucio di Salerno may have suggested it. Though the 'tale' offers a close parallel to the story of Jessica and Lorenzo, it need not be taken into account for, Verity tells us that "no Elizabethan translation of his Italian story is known, and whether Shakespeare ever used the story seems to me very doubtful." Even if the Jessica-Lorenzo story is deleted, the drama does not in any way lose its appeal. But the story is introduced to please popular sentiment which approves with applause the love between a Jew and a Christian and the conversion of the former to Christianity. If she were to rob her father, the greater becomes the applause.

The conduct of Jessica, however, throws more light on the character of Shylock the man. He is totally alive to such qualities as mercy and pity. He lives on extortionate usury and forfeitures. To him money was more important than, or at least not less important than, his daughter. At no time does he speak an affectionate word about her. He would gladly see his daughter dead at his feet : so the jewels were in her ear, and the ducats in her coffin. Apologists may put down even these words to his hatred of Christians. But Jessica herself answers them. (II 3). She says, "Our house is hell" and "Alack, what heinous sin is it in me to be ashamed to be my father's blood." To him the most important thing appears to be his house to which he attributes a personality. He asks her to "stop

my house's ears, I mean my casements'; in the court, he cries out,

Nay, take my life and all; pardon not that:  
You take my house when you do take the prop<sup>t</sup>  
That doth sustain my house; my life  
When you do take the means wherby I live.

Even here love of money gets the better of the love of his house. The only occasion on which he speaks with some warmth of human love is when he refers to his wife: "It was may turquoise: I had it of Leah when I was a bachelor." (III i)

Launcelot says 'the Jew my master...is a kind of devil ...Certainly the Jew is the very devil incarnation.' 'My master's is a very Jew. I am famished in his service; you may tell every finger I have with my ribs.' (II 2)

Little purpose is served by pretending to make a tragic figure of Shylock; he is a villain. Once that is granted, his very excuses make him at times a ludicrous figure. Though he forbids laughter, we cannot help parting our lips in a smile. He hovers on the border line of tragedy and comedy; Thalia would fair disown him (in spite of John Palmer, who attempts to make Shylock her natural son), but Melpomene dislikes to own him: Shylock the Jew reaches out to Melpomene, but Shylock the man pulls him down. In the end one may pity him, but one finds it hard to sympathise with him.

"As a usurer," writes John Russell Brown, "Shylock is given an opportunity to justify him seems as if Shakespeare was determined not to create a 'stage villain', who would always evoke a simple, hostile response. Shylock is a most complex and dominating character; he appears in only five scenes and yet for many people he is the centre

of the play's interest. As an old miserly father he is comic, as a Jew he is savage and ruthless, as a usurer he seeks to ensure the needy and Antonio, their protector. Yet in all these roles he is also a man who suffers and triumphs, speaks at times with great nobility, and has a 'kind of wild justice' in his cry for revenge."



# THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

THE DUKE OF VENICE.

THE PRINCE OF MOROCCO, }  
THE PRINCE OF ARRAGON, } suitors to Portia.

ANTONIO, a merchant of Venice.

BASSANIO, his friend, suitor likewise to Portia.

SOLANIO, }  
SALARINO, } friends to Antonio and Bassanio.  
GRATIANO, }

LORENZO, in love with Jessica.

SHYLOCK, a rich Jew.

TUBAL, a Jew, his friend.

LAUNCELOT GOBBO, the clown, servant to Shylock.

OLD GOBBO, father to Launcelot.

LEONARDO, servant to Bassanio.

BALTHASAR, }  
STEPHANO, } servants to Portia.

PORTIA, a rich heiress.

NERISSA, her waiting-maid.

JESSICA, daughter to Shylock

Magnificoes of Venice, Officers of the Court of Justice,  
Gaoler, Servants to Portia, and other Attendants.

SCENE: *Partly at Venice, and partly at Belmont, the seat of  
Portia, on the Continent.*

# THE MERCHANT OF VENICE.

## ACT I.

### SCENE I. *Venice. A street.*

*Enter* ANTONIO, SALARINO, and SOLANIO.

*Ant.* In sooth, I know not why I am so sad :  
It wearies me ; you say it wearies you ;  
But how I caught it, found it, or came by it,  
What stuff'tis made of, whereof it is born,  
I am to learn ;  
And such a want-wit sadness makes of me,  
That I have much ado to know myself.

*Salar.* Your mind is tossing on the ocean ;  
There, where your argosies with portly sail,  
Like signiors and rich burghers on the flood, 10  
Or, as it were, the pageants of the sea,  
Do overpeer the petty traffickers,  
That curtsy to them, do them reverence,  
As they fly by them with their woven wings.

*Solan.* Believe me, sir, had I such venture forth,  
The better part of my affections would  
Be with my hopes abroad. I should be still  
Plucking the grass, to know where sits the wind,  
Peering in maps for ports and piers and roads ;  
And every object that might make me fear



Misfortune to my ventures, out of doubt  
Would make me sad.

*Salar.* My wind cooling my broth  
Would blow me to an ague, when I thought  
What harm a wind too great at sea might do.  
I should not see the sandy hour-glass run,  
But I should think of shallows and of flats.  
And see my wealthy Andrew dock'd in sand,  
Vailing her high-top lower than her ribs  
To kiss her burial. Should I go to church  
And see the holy edifice of stone, 30  
And not bethink me straight of dangerous rocks,  
Which touching but my gentle vessel's side,  
Would scatter all her spices on the stream,  
Enrobe the roaring waters with my silks,  
And, in a word, but even now worth this,  
And now worth nothing? Shall I have the thought  
To think on this, and shall I lack the thought  
That such a thing bechanced would make me sad?  
But tell not me; I know, Antonio  
Is sad to think upon his merchandise. 40

*Ant.* Believe me, no: I thank my fortune for it,  
My ventures are not in one bottom trusted,  
Nor to one place; nor is my whole estate  
Upon the fortune of this present year:  
Therefore my merchandise makes me not sad.

*Salar.* Why, then you are in love.

*Ant.* Fie, fie!

*Salar.* Not in love neither? Then let us say you are sad,  
Because you are not merry: and 'twere as easy  
For you to laugh and leap and say you are merry,  
Because you are not sad. [Now, by two-headed Janus, 50  
Nature hath framed strange fellows in her time:

Some that will evermore peep through their eyes  
And laugh like parrots at a bag-piper,  
And other of such vinegar aspect  
That they'll not show their teeth in way of smile,  
Though Nestor swear the jest be laughable!

*Enter BASSANIO, LORENZO, and GRATIANO.*

*Solan.* Here comes Bassanio, your most noble kinsman,  
Gratiano and Lorenzo. Fare ye well :

We leave you now with better company. 59

*Solan.* I would have stay'd till I had made you merry,  
If worthier friends had not prevented me.

*Ant.* Your worth is very dear in my regard.  
I take it, your own business calls on you  
And you embrace the occasion to depart.

*Salar.* Good morrow, my good lords.

*Bass.* Good signiors both, when shall we laugh ? say,  
when ?

You grow exceeding strange : must it be so ?

*Salar.* We'll make our leisures to attend on yours.

*[Exeunt Salarino and Solanio.]*

*Lor.* My Lord Bassanio, since you have found Antonio,  
We two will leave you : but at dinner-time, 70  
I pray you, have in mind where we must meet.

*Bass.* I will not fail you.

*Grat.* You look not well, Signior Antonio ;  
You have too much respect upon the world :  
They lose it that do buy it with much care :  
Believe me, you are marvellously changed.

*Ant.* I hold the world but as the world, Gratiano ;  
A stage where every man must play a part,  
And mine a sad one.

*Gra.* Let me play the fool :

With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come, 80

And let my liver rather heat with wine

Than my heart cool with mortifying groans.

Why should a man, whose blood is warm within  
Sit like his grandsire cut in alabaster ?

Sleep when he wakes and creep into the jaundice

By being peevish ? I tell thee what, Antonio—

I love thee, and it is my love that speaks—

There are a sort of men whose visages

Do cream and mantle like a standing pond,

And do a wilful stillness entertain, 90

With purpose to be dress'd in an opinion

Of wisdom, gravity, profound conceit,

As who should say 'I am Sir Oracle,

And when I ope my lips let no dog bark !

O my Antonio, I do know of these

That therefore only are reputed wise

For saying nothing, when, I am very sure,

If they should speak, would almost damn those ears

Which, hearing them, would call their brothers fools.

I'll tell thee more of this another time : 100

But fish not, with this melancholy bait,

For this fool gudgeon, this opinion,

Come, good Lorenzo. Fare ye well awhile :

I'll end my exhortation after dinner.

*Lor.* Well, we will leave you then till dinner-time :

I must be one of these same dumb wise men,

For Gratiano never lets me speak.

*Gra.* Well, keep me company but two years moe,  
Thou shalt not know the sound of thine own tongue.

*Ant.* Farewell : I'll grow a talker for this gear. 110

*Gra.* Thanks, i' faith, for silence is only commendable

In a neat's tongue dried and a maid not vendible.

[*Reunt Gratiano and Lorenzo.*]

*Ant.* Is that any thing now?

*Bass.* Gratiano speaks an infinite deal of nothing, more than any man in all Venice His reasons are as two grains of wheat hid in two bushels of chaff: you shall seek all day ere you find them, and when you have them, they are not worth the search.

*Ant.* Well, tell me now what lady is the same  
To whom you swore a secret pilgrimage, 120  
That you to-day promised to tell me of?

*Bass.* 'Tis not unknown to you, Antonio,  
How much I have disabled mine estate,  
By something showing a more swelling port  
Than my faint means would grant continuance :  
Nor do I now make moan to be abridged  
From such a noble rate ; but my chief care  
Is to come fairly off from the great debts  
Wherein my time something too prodigal  
Hath left me gaged. To you, Antonio, 130  
I owe the most, in money and in love,  
And from your love I have a warranty  
To unburden all my plots and purposes  
How to get clear of all the debts I owe.

*Ant.* I pray you, good Bassanio, let me know it ;  
And if it stand, as you yourself still do,  
Within the eye of honour, be assured,  
My purse, my person, my extremest means,  
Lie all unlock'd to your occasions.

*Bass.* [In my school-days, when I had lost one shaft, 140  
I shot his fellow of the self-same flight  
The self same way with more advised watch,  
To find the other forth, and by adventuring both

I oft found both : I urge this childhood proof  
Because what follows is pure innocence.  
I owe you much, and, like a wilful youth,  
That which I owe is lost ; but if you please  
To shoot another arrow that self way  
Which you did shoot the first, I do not doubt,  
As I will watch the aim, or to find both 150  
Or bring your latter hazard back again  
And thankfully rest debtor for the first.

*Ant.* You know me well, and herein spend but time  
To wind about my love with circumstance ;  
And out of doubt you do me now more wrong  
In making question of my uttermost  
Than if you had made waste of all I have :  
Then do but say to me what I should do  
That in your knowledge may by me be done,  
And I am prest unto it : therefore, speak. 160

*Biss.* In Belmont is a lady richly left ;  
And she is fair and, fairer than that word,  
Of wondrous virtues : sometimes from her eyes  
I did receive fair speechless messages :  
Her name is Portia, nothing undervalued  
To Cato's daughter, Brutus' Portia ;  
Nor is the wide world ignorant of her worth,  
For the four winds blow in from every coast  
Renowned suitors, and her sunny locks  
Hang on her temples like a golden fleece ; 170  
Which makes her seat of Belmont Colchos' strond,  
And many Jasons come in quest of her.  
O my Antonio, had I but the means  
To hold a rival place with one of them,  
I have a mind presages me such thrift,  
That I should questionless be fortunate !

*Ant.* Thou know'st that all my fortunes are at sea ;  
Neither have I money nor commodity  
To raise a present sum : therefore go forth ;  
Try what my credit can in Venice do : 180  
That shall be rack'd, even to the uttermost,  
To furnish thee to Belmont, to fair Portia.  
Go, presently inquire, and so will I,  
Where money is, and I no question make  
To have it of my trust or for my sake. [*Ereunt.*

SCENE II. *Belmont. A room in PORTIA'S house.*

*Enter PORTIA and NERISSA.*

*Por.* By my troth, Nerissa, my little body is aweary  
of this great world.

*Ner.* You would be, sweet madam, if your miseries were  
in the same abundance as your good fortunes are : and  
yet, for aught I see, they are as sick that surfeit with too  
much as they that starve with nothing. It is no mean  
happiness therefore, to be seated in the mean : superfluity  
comes sooner by white hairs, but competency lives longer.

*Por.* Good sentences and well pronounced.

*Ner.* They would be better, if well followed. 10

*Por.* If to do were as easy as to know what were good  
to do, chapels had been churches and poor men's cottages  
princes' palaces. It is a good divine that follows his own  
instructions ; I can easier teach twenty what were good  
to be done, than be one of the twenty to follow mine own  
teaching. The brain may devise laws for the blood, but a  
hot temper leaps o'er a cold decree : such a hare is  
madness the youth, to skip o'er the meshes of good counsel

the cripple.) But this reasoning is not in the fashion to choose me a husband. O me, the word 'choose! I may neither choose whom I would nor refuse whom I dislike; so is the will of a living daughter curbed by the will of a dead father. Is it not hard, Nerissa, that I cannot choose one nor refuse none? 24

*Ner.* Your father was ever virtuous; and holy men at their death have good inspirations: therefore the lottery, that he hath devised in these three chests of gold, silver and lead, whereof who chooses his meaning chooses you, will, no doubt, never be chosen by any rightly but one who shall rightly love. But what warmth is there in your affection towards any of these princely suitors that are already come? 32

*Por.* I pray thee, over-name them; and as thou namest them, I will describe them; and, according to my description, level at my affection.

*Ner.* First, there is the Neapolitan prince.

*Por.* Ay, that's a colt indeed, for he doth nothing but talk of his horse; and he makes it a great appropriation to his own good parts, that he can shoe him himself.

*Ner.* Then there is the County Palatine. 40

*Por.* He doth nothing but frown, as who should say 'If you will not have me, choose:' he hears merry tales and smiles not: I fear he will prove the weeping philosopher when he grows old, being so full of unmannerly sadness in his youth. I had rather be married to a death's-head with a bone in his mouth than to either of these. God defend me from these two! 47

*Ner.* How say you by the French lord, Monsieur le Bon?

*Por.* God made him, and therefore let him pass for a man. In truth, I know it is a sin to be a mocker: but, he! why, he hath a horse better than the Neapolitan's, a better

bad habit of frowning than the Count Palatine; he is every man in no man; if a throstle sing, he falls straight a capering: he will fence with his own shadow: if I should marry him, I should marry twenty husbands If he would despise me, I would forgive him, for if he love me to madness, I shall never requite him.

*Ner.* What say you, then, to Falconbridge, the young baron of England? 59

*Por.* You know I say nothing to him, for he understands not me, nor I him: he hath neither Latin, French, nor Italian, and you will come into the court and swear that I have a poor pennyworth in the English. He is a proper man's picture, but, alas, who can converse with a dumbshow? How oddly he is suited! I think he bought his doublet in Italy, his round hose in France, his bonnet in Germany and his behaviour every where.

*Ner.* What think you of the Scottish lord, his neighbour?

*Por.* That he hath a neighbourly charity in him, for he borrowed a box of the ear of the Englishman and swore he would pay him again when he was able: I think the Frenchman became his surety and sealed under for another. 73

*Ner.* How like you the young German, the Duke of Saxony's nephew?

*Por.* (Very vilely in the morning, when he is sober, and most vilely in the afternoon, when he is drunk: when he is best, he is a little worse than a man, and when he is worst, he is little better than a beast) an the worst fall that ever fell, I hope I shall make shift to go without him.

*Ner.* If he should offer to choose, and choose the right casket, you should refuse to perform your father's will, if you should refuse to accept him.

*Por.* Therefore, for fear of the worst, I pray thee, set a



deep glass of rhenish wine on the contrary casket, for if the devil be within and that temptation without, I know he will choose it. I will do any thing, Nerissa, ere I'll be married to a sponge. 88

*Ner.* You need not fear, lady, the having any of these lords: they have acquainted me with their determinations; which is, indeed, to return to their home and to trouble you with no more suit, unless you may be won by some other sort than your father's imposition depending on the caskets.

*Por.* If I live to be as old as Sibylla, I will die as chaste as Diana, unless I be obtained by the manner of my father's will. I am glad this parcel of wooers are so reasonable, for there is not one among them but I dote on his very absence, and I pray God grant them a fair departure.

*Ner.* Do you not remember, lady, in your father's time, a Venetian, a scholar and a soldier, that came hither in company of the Marquis of Montferrat? 103

*Por.* Yes, yes, it was Bassanio; as I think, he was so called.

*Ner.* True, madam: he, of all the men that ever my foolish eyes looked upon, was the best deserving a fair lady.

*Por.* I remember him well, and I remember him worthy of thy praise.

*Enter a Serving-man.*

How now! what news?

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*Serv.* The four strangers seek for you, madam, to take their leave: and there is a forerunner come from a fifth, the Prince of Morocco, who brings word the prince his master

will be here to-night.

*Por.* If I could bid the fifth welcome with so good a heart as I can bid the other four farewell, I should be glad of his approach : if he have the condition of a saint and the complexion of a devil, I had rather he should shrive me than wive me.

Come, Nerissa. Sirrah, go before. 122

Whiles we shut the gates upon one wooer, another knocks at the door. [*Ereunt.*

SCENE III. *Venice. A public place.*

*Enter BASSANIO and SHYLOCK.*

*Shy.* Three thousand ducats ; well.

*Bass.* Ay, sir, for three months.

*Shy.* For three months ; well.

*Bass.* For the which, as I told you, Antonio shall be bound.

*Shy.* Antonio shall become bound ; well.

*Bass.* May you stead me ? will you pleasure me ? shall I know your answer ?

*Shy.* Three thousand ducats for three months and Antonio bound. 10

*Bass.* Your answer to that.

*Shy.* Antonio is a good man.

*Bass.* Have you heard any imputation to the contrary ?

*Shy.* Oh, no, no, no, no : my meaning in saying he is a good man is to have you understand me that he is sufficient. Yet his means are in supposition : he hath an argosy bound to Tripolis, another to the Indies ; I understand, moreover, upon the Rialto, he hath a third at

Mexico, a fourth for England, and other ventures he hath, squandered abroad. But ships are but boards, sailors but men : there be land-rats and water-rats, land-thieves and water-thieves, I mean pirates, and then there is the peril of waters-winds and rocks. The man is, notwithstanding, sufficient. Three thousand ducats ; I think I may take his bond.

*Bass.* Be assured you may.

*Shy.* I will be assured I may ; and, that I may be assured, I will bethink me. May I speak with Antonio ?

*Bass.* If it please you to dine with us. 29

*Shy.* Yes, to smell pork ; to eat of the habitation which your prophet the Nazarite conjured the devil into. I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you, and so following, but I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you. What news on the Rialto ? Who is he comes here ?

*Enter ANTONIO.*

*Bass.* This is Signior Antonio.

*Shy.* [*Aside*] How like a fawning publican he looks ! I hate him for he is a Christian,  
But more for that in low simplicity  
He lends out money gratis and brings down 40  
The rate of usance here with us in Venice.  
If I can catch him once upon the hip,  
I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him.  
He hates our sacred nation, and he rails,  
Even there where merchants most do congregate,  
On me, my bargains and my well-won thrift,  
Which he calls interest. Cursed be my tribe,  
If I forgive him !

*Bass.* Shylock, do you hear?

*Shy.* I am debating of my present store, 50  
And, by the near guess of my memory,  
I cannot instantly raise up the gross  
Of full three thousand ducats. What of that?  
Tubal, a wealthy Hebrew of my tribe,  
Will furnish me. But soft! how many months  
Do you desire? [*To Ant.*] Rest you fair, good signior;  
Your worship was the last man in our mouths.

*Ant.* Shylock, although I neither lend nor borrow  
By taking nor by giving of excess,  
Yet, to supply the ripe wants of my friend. 60  
I'll break a custom. Is he yet possess'd  
How much ye would?

*Shy.* Ay, ay, three thousand ducats.

*Ant.* And for three months.

*Shy.* I had forgot; three months; you told me so.  
Well, then, your bond; and let me see; but hear you;  
Methought you said you neither lend nor borrow  
Upon advantage.

*Ant.* I do never use it.

*Shy.* [When Jacob grazed his uncle Laban's sheep—  
This Jacob from our holy Abram was,  
As his wise mother wrought in his behalf,  
The third possessor; ay, he was the third—

*Ant.* And what of him? did he take interest?

*Shy.* No, not take interest, not, as you would say,  
Directly interest: mark what Jacob did.  
When Laban and himself were compromised  
That all the eanlings which were streak'd and pied  
Should fall as Jacob's hire,  
The skilful shepherd peel'd me certain wands 80  
And stuck them up before the fulsome ewes,

Who then conceiving did in eaning time  
Fall parti-colour'd lambs, and those were Jacob's.  
This was a way to thrive, and he was blest :  
And thrift is blessing, if men steal it not.

*Ant.* This was a venture, sir, that Jacob served for ;  
A thing not in his power to bring to pass,  
But sway'd and fashion'd by the hand of heaven.  
Was this inserted to make interest good ?  
Or is your gold and silver ewes and rams ? 90

*Shy.* I cannot tell ; I make it breed as fast :  
But note me, signior.

*Ant.* Mark you this, Bassanio,  
The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose.  
An evil soul producing holy witness  
Is like a villain with a smiling cheek,  
A goodly apple rotten at the heart :  
O, what a goodly outside falsehood hath !

*Shy.* Three thousand ducats ; 'tis a good round sum.  
Three months from twelve ; then, let me see ; the  
rate— 100

*Ant.* Well, Shylock, shall we be beholding to you ?

*Shy.* Signior Antonio, many a time and oft  
In the Rialto you have rated me  
About my moneys and my usances :  
Still have I borne it with a patient shrug,  
For sufferance is the badge of all our tribe.  
You call me misbeliever, cut throat dog,  
And spit upon my Jewish gaberdine,  
And all for use of that which is mine own.  
Well then, it now appears you need my help : 110  
Go to, then ; you come to me, and you say  
'Shylock, we would have moneys :' you say so ;  
You, that did void your rheum upon my beard

And foot me as you spurn a stranger cur  
Over your threshold : moneys is your suit.  
What should I say to you ? Should I not say  
'Hath a dog money ? is it possible  
A cur can lend three thousand ducats ?' Or  
Shall I bend low and in a bondman's key,  
With bated breath and whispering humbleness, 120  
Say this ;  
'Fair sir, you spit on me on Wednesday last ;  
You spurn'd me such a day ; another time  
You call'd me dog ; and for these courtesies  
I 'll lend you thus much moneys' ?

*Ant.* I am as like to call thee so again,  
To spit on thee again, to spurn thee too.  
If thou wilt lend this money, lend it not  
As to thy friends ; for when did friendship take  
A breed for barren metal of his friend ? 130  
But lend it rather to thine enemy,  
Who, if he break, thou mayst with better face  
Exact the penalty.

*Shy.* Why, look you, how you storm !  
I would be friends with you and have your love,  
Forget the shames that you have stain'd me with,  
Supply your present wants and take no doit  
Of usance for my moneys, and you 'll not hear me :  
This is kind I offer.

*Bass.* This were kindness. 140

*Shy.* This kindness will I show.

Go with me to a notary, seal me there  
Your single bond ; and, in a merry sport,  
If you repay me not on such a day,  
In such a place, such sum or sums as are  
Express'd in the condition, let the forfeit

Be nominated for an equal pound  
Of your fair flesh, to be cut off and taken  
In what part of your body pleaseth me.

*Ant.* Content, i' faith : I'll seal to such a bond 150

And say there is much kindnees in the Jew.

*Bass.* You shall not seal to such a bond for me :  
I'll rather dwell in my necessity.

*Ant.* Why, fear not, man ; I will not forfeit it :  
Within these two months, that's a month before  
This bond expires, I do expect return  
Of thrice three times the value of this bond.

*Shy.* O father Abram, what these Christians are,  
Whose own hard dealings teaches them suspect  
The thoughts of others ! Pray you, tell me this ; 160  
If he should break his day, what should I gain  
By the exaction of the forfeiture ?

A pound of man's flesh taken from a man  
Is not so estimable, profitable neither,  
As flesh of muttons, beefs, or goats. I say,  
To buy his favour, I extend this friendship :  
If he will take it, so ; if not, adieu ;  
And, for my love, I pray you wrong me not.

*Ant.* Yes, Shylock, I will seal unto this bond.

*Shy.* Then meet me forthwith at the notary's ; 170  
Give him direction for this merry bond,  
And I will go and purse the ducats straight,  
See to my house, left in the fearful guard  
Of an unthrifty knave, and presently  
I will be with you.

*Ant.* Hie thee, gentle Jew. [Exit Shylock.]

The Hebrew will turn Christian : he grows kind.

*Bass.* I like not fair terms and a villain's mind.

*Ant.* Come on : in this there can be no dismay ; 179  
My ships come a month before the day. [Re-enter Shylock.]

## ACT II.

SCENE I. *Belmont. A room in PORTIA'S house.**Flourish of cornets. Enter the PRINCE OF MOROCCO and his train ; PORTIA, NERISSA, and others attending.*

*Mor.* Mislike me not for my complexion,  
The shadow'd livery of the burnish'd sun,  
To whom I am a neighbour and near bred.  
Bring me the fairest creature northward born,  
Where Phoebus' fire scarce thaws the icicles,  
And let us make incision for your love,  
To prove whose blood is reddest, his or mine  
I tell thee, lady, this aspect of mine  
Hath fear'd the valiant : by my lover, I swear  
The best-regarded virgins of our clime  
Have loved it too : I would not change this hue,  
Except to steal your thoughts, my gentle queen.

10

*Por.* In terms of choice I am not solely led  
By nice direction of a maiden's eyes :  
Besides, the lottery of my destiny  
Bars me the right of voluntary choosing :  
But if my father had not scanted me  
And hedged me by his wit, to yield myself  
His wife who wins me by that means I told you,  
Yourself, renowned prince, then stood as fair  
As any comer I have look'd on yet  
For my affection.

20

*Mor.* Even for that I thank you :  
Therefore, I pray you, lead me to the caskets  
To try my fortune. By this scimitar  
That slew the Sophy and a Persian prince  
That won three fields of Sultan Solyman,



I would outstare the sternest eyes that look,  
Outbrave the heart most daring on the earth,  
Pluck the young sucking cubs from the she-bear,        30  
Yea, mock the lion when he roars for prey,  
To win thee, lady. But, alas the while !  
If Hercules and Lichas play at dice  
Which is the better man, the greater throw  
May turn by fortune from the weaker hand :  
So is Alcides beaten by his page ;  
And so may I, blind fortune leading me,  
Miss that which one unworthier may attain,  
And die with grieving.

*Por.*                                You must take your chance,        40  
And either not attempt to choose at all  
Or swear before you choose, if you choose wrong  
Never to speak to lady afterward  
In way of marriage : therefore be advised.

*Mor.* Nor will not. Come bring me unto my chance.

*Por.* First, forward to the temple : after dinner  
Your hazard shall be made.

*Mor.*                                Good fortune then !  
To make me blest or cursed'st among men.

[*Cornets, and exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *Venice. A street.*

*Enter LAUNCELOT.*

*Laun.* Certainly my conscience will serve me to run from this Jew my master. The fiend is at mine elbow and tempts me saying to me 'Gobbo, Launcelot Gobbo, good Launcelot,' of 'good Gobbo,' or 'good Launcelot Gobbo, use your legs, take the start, run away.' My conscience says

'No; take heed, honest Launcelot; take heed, honest Gobbo,' or, as aforesaid, 'honest Lanucelot Gobbo; do not run; scorn running with thy heels.' Well, the most courageous fiend bids me pack: 'Via!' says the fiend; 'away!' says the fiend; 'for the heavens, rouse up a brave mind', says the fiend, 'and run.' Well, my conscience, hanging about the neck of my heart, says very wisely to me 'My honest friend Launcelot, being an honest man's son', or rather an honest woman's son; for, indeed, my father did something smack, something grow to, he had a kind of taste; well, my conscience says 'Launcelot, budge not.' 'Budge,' says the fiend. 'Budge not,' says my conscience. 'Conscience,' say I, 'you counsel well;'; 'Fiend,' say I, 'you counsel well:': to be ruled by my conscience, I should stay with the Jew my master, who, God bless the mark, is a kind of devil; and, to run away from the Jew, I should be ruled by the fiend, who, saving your reverence, is the devil himself. Certainly the Jew is the very devil incarnal; and, in my conscience, my conscience is but a kind of hard conscience, to offer to counsel me to stay with the Jew. The fiend gives the more friendly counsel: I will run, fiend; my heels are at your command; I will run. 27

*Enter Old GOBBO with a basket.*

*Gob.* Master young man, you, I pray you, which is the way to Master Jew's?

*Laun.* [*Aside*] O heavens, this is my true-begotten father! who, being more than sand-blind, high-gravel blind knows me not: I will try confusions with him. 33

*Gob.* Master young gentleman, I pray you, which is the way to Master Jew's?

*Laun.* Turn up on your right hand at the next turning

but, at the next turning of all, on your left ; marry, at the very next turning, turn of no hand, but turn down indirectly to the Jew's house.

*Gob.* By God's sonties, 'twill be a hard way to hit. Can you tell me whether one Launcelot, that dwells with him, dwell with him or no ? 42

*Laun.* Talk you of young Master Launcelot ? [*Aside*] Mark me now ; now will I raise the waters. Talk you of young Master Launcelot ?

*Gob.* No master, sir, but a poor man's son : his father, though I say it, is an honest exceeding poor man and, God be thanked, well to live.

*Laun.* Well, let his father be what a' will, we talk of young Master Launcelot.

*Gob.* Your worship's friend and Launcelot, sir.

*Laun.* But I pray you, ergo, old man, ergo, I beseech you, talk you of young Master Launcelot ? 53

*Gob.* Of Launcelot, an't please your mastership.

*Laun.* Ergo, Master Launcelot. Talk not of Master Launcelot, father ; for the young gentleman, according to Fates and Destinies and such odd sayings, the Sisters Three and such branches of learning, is indeed deceased, or, as you would say in plain terms, gone to heaven.

*Gob.* Marry, God forbid ! the boy was the very staff of my age, my very prop. 61

*Laun.* Do I look like a cudgel or a hovel-post, a staff or a prop ? Do you know me, father ?

*Gob.* Alack the day, I know you not, young gentleman : but, I pray you, tell me, is my boy, God rest his soul, alive or dead ?

*Laun.* Do you not know me, father ?

*Gob.* Alack, sir, I am sand-blind ; I know you not.

*Laun.* Nay, indeed, if you had your eyes, you might

fail of the knowing me : it is a wise father that knows his own child. Well, old man, I will tell you news of your son : give me your blessing : truth will come to light ; murder cannot be hid long ; a man's son may, but at the length truth will out. 74

*Gob.* Pray you, sir, stand up : I am sure you are not Launcelot, my boy.

*Laun.* Pray you, let's have no more fooling about it, but give me your blessing : I am Launcelot, your boy that was, your son that is, your child that shall be.

*Gob.* I cannot think you are my son

*Laun.* I know not what I shall think of that : but I am Launcelot, the Jew's man, and I am sure Margery your wife is my mother. 83

*Gob.* Her name is Margery, indeed : I'll be sworn, if thou be Launcelot, thou art mine own flesh and blood. Lord worshipped might he be ! what a beard hast thou got ! thou hast got more hair on thy chin than Dobbin my fill-horse has on his tail.

*Laun.* It should seem, then, that Dobbin's tail grows backward : I am sure he had more hair of his tail than I have of my face when I last saw him.

*Gob.* Lord, how art thou changed ! How dost thou and thy master agree ? I have brought him a present. How 'gree you now ? 94

*Laun.* Well, well : but, for mine own part, as I have set up my rest to run away, so I will not rest till I have run some ground. My master's a very Jew : give him a present ! give him a halter : I am famished in his service ; you may tell every finger I have with my ribs. Father, I am glad you are come : give me your present to one Master Bassanio, who, indeed, gives rare new liveries : if I serve not him, I will run as far as God has any ground. O rare

fortune ! here comes the man : to him, father ; for I am a Jew, if I serve the Jew any longer. 104

*Enter BASSANIO, with LEONARDO and other followers.*

*Bass.* You may do so ; but let it be so hasted that supper be ready at the farthest by five of the clock. See these letters delivered ; put the liveries to making, and desire Gratiano to come anon to my lodging. [*Exit a Servant.*

*Laun.* To him, father.

*Gob.* God bless your worship !

*Bass.* Gramercy, would'st thou aught with me ?

*Gob.* Here's my son, sir, a poor boy,— 112

*Laun.* Not a poor boy, sir, but the rich Jew's man ; that would, sir, as my father shall specify—

*Gob.* He hath a great infection, sir, as one would say, to serve,—

*Laun.* Indeed, the short and the long is, I serve the Jew, and have a desire, as my father shall specify—

*Gob.* His master and he, saying your worships reverence, are scarce cater cousins—

*Laun.* To be brief, the very truth is that the Jew, having done me wrong, doth cause me, as my father, being, I hope, an old man, shall frutify unto you— 123

*Gob.* I have here a dish of doves that I would bestow upon your worship, and my suit is—

*Laun.* In very brief, the suit is impertinent to myself, as your worship shall know by this honest old man ; and, though I say it, though old man, yet poor man, my father.

*Bass.* One speak for both. What would you ?

*Laun.* Serve you, sir.

*Gob.* That is the very defect of the matter, sir.

*Bass.* I know thee well ; thou hast obtain'd thy suit: 132

Shylock thy master spoke with me this day,  
And hath preferr'd thee, if it be preferment  
To leave a rich Jew's service, to become  
The follower of so poor a gentleman.

*Laun.* The old proverb is very well parted between my master Shylock and you, sir : you have the grace of God, and he hath enough.

*Bass.* Thou speak'st it well. Go, father, with thy son. Take leave of thy old master and inquire  
My lodging out. Give him a livery 142  
More guarded than his fellows' : see it done.

*Laun.* Father, in. I cannot get a service, no : I have ne'er a tongue in my head. Well, if any man in Italy have a fairer table which doth offer to swear upon a book, I shall have good fortune. Go to, here's a simple line of life ; here's a small trifle of wives : alas, fifteen wives is nothing ! eleven widows and nine maids is a simple coming-in for one man : and then to 'scape drowning thrice, and to be in peril of my life with the edge of a feather bed ; here are simple scapes. Well, if Fortune be a woman, she's a good wench for this gear. Father, come ; I'll take my leave of the Jew in the twinkling of an eye. 154

[*Exeunt Launcelot and old Gobbo.*]

*Bass.* I pray thee good Leonardo, think on this :  
These things being bought and orderly bestow'd,  
Return in haste, for I do feast to-night  
My best-esteem'd acquaintance : hie thee, go.

*Leon.* My best endeavours shall be done herein.

*Enter GRATIANO.*

*Gra.* Where is your master ?

*Leon.* Yonder, sir, he walks. [*Exit.*]

*Gra.* Signior Bassanio ! 162

*Bass.* Gratiano !

*Gra.* I have a suit to you.

*Bass.* You have obtain'd it.

*Gra.* You must not deny me : I must go with you to Belmont.

*Bass.* Why, then you must. But hear thee, Gratiano ;  
Thou art too wild, too rude and bold of voice ;  
Parts that become thee happily enough  
And in such eyes as ours appear not faults ;  
But where thou art not known, why, there they show 172  
Something too liberal. Pray thee, take pain  
To allay with some cold drops of modesty  
Thy skipping spirit, lest through thy wild behaviour  
I be misconstrued in the place I go to  
And lose my hopes.

*Gra.* Signior Bassanio, hear me :  
If I do not put on a sober habit,  
Talk with respect and swear but now and then,  
Wear prayer-books in my pocket, look demurely,  
Nay more, while grace is saying, hood mine eyes 182  
Thus with my hat, and sigh and say 'amen,'  
Use all the observance of civility,  
Like one well studied in a sad ostent  
To please his grandam, never trust me more.

*Bass.* Well, we shall see your bearing.

*Gra.* Nay, but I bar to-night : you shall not gauge me  
By what we do to-night.

*Bass.* No, that were pity : 190  
I would entreat you rather to put on  
Your boldest suit of mirth, for we have friends  
That purpose merriment. But fare you well :  
I have some business.

*Gra.* And I must to Lorenzo and the rest :  
But we will visit you at supper-time. [*Exeunt.* 196

SCENE III *The same. A room in SHYLOCK'S house.*

*Enter JESSICA and LAUNCELOT.*

*Jes.* I am sorry thou wilt leave my father so :  
Our house is hell, and thou, a merry devil,  
Didst rob it of some taste of tediousness.  
But fare thee well, there is a ducat for thee :  
And, Launcelot, soon at supper shalt thou see  
Lorenzo, who is thy new master's guest :  
Give him this letter ; do it secretly ;  
And so farewell : I would not have my father  
See me talk with thee. 9

*Laun.* Adieu ! tears exhibit my tongue. Most beautiful  
pagan, most sweet Jew ! But, adieu : these foolish drops  
do something drown my manly spirit : adieu.

*Jes.* Farewell, good Launcelot. [*Exit Launcelot.*  
Alack, what heinous sin is it in me  
To be ashamed to be my father's child !  
But though I am a daughter to his blood,  
I am not to his manners. O Lorenzo,  
If thou keep promise, I shall end this strife,  
Become a Christian and thy loving wife. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV. *The same. A street.*

*Enter GRATIANO, LORENZO, SALARINO, and SOLANIO.*

*Lor.* Nay, we will slink away in supper-time,  
Disguise us at my lodging and return,



All in an hour.

*Gra.* We have not made good preparation.

*Salar.* We have not spoke us yet of torch-bearers.

*Solan.* 'Tis vile, unless it may be quaintly order'd,  
And better in my mind not undertook.

*Lor.* 'Tis now but four o'clock : we have two hours  
To furnish us.

*Enter LAUNCELOT with a letter.*

Friend Launcelot, what's the news ? 9

*Laun.* An it shall please you to break up this, it shall  
seem to signify.

*Lor.* I know the hand : in faith, 'tis a fair hand ;  
And whiter than the paper it writ on  
Is the fair hand that writ.

*Gra.* Love-news, in faith.

*Laun.* By your leave, sir.

*Lor.* Whither goest thou ?

*Laun.* Marry, sir, to bid my old master the Jew to sup  
to-night with my new master the Christian.

*Lor.* Hold here, take this : tell gentle Jessica I will not  
fail her ; speak it privately. 20

Go, gentlemen, *[Exit Launcelot.*

Will you prepare you for this masque to-night ?

I am provided of a torch-bearer.

*Salar.* Ay, marry, I 'll be gone about it straight.

*Solan.* And so will I.

*Lor.* Meet me and Gratiano

At Gratiano's lodging some hour hence.

*Salar.* 'Tis good we do so. *[Exeunt Salar, and Solan.*

*Gra.* Was not that letter from fair Jessica ?

*Lor.* I must needs tell thee all. She hath directed

How I shall take her from her father's house, 30  
What gold and jewels she is furnish'd with,  
What page's suit she hath in readiness.  
If e'er the Jew her father come to heaven,  
It will be for his gentle daughter's sake :  
And never dare misfortune cross her foot,  
Unless she do it under this excuse,  
That she is issue<sup>d</sup> to a faithless Jew.  
Come, go with me ; peruse this as thou goest :  
Fair Jessica shall be my torch bearer. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. *The same. Before SHYLOCK'S house.*

*Enter SHYLOCK and LAUNCELOT.*

*Shy.* Well, thou shalt see, thy eyes shall be thy judge,  
The difference of old Shylock and Bassanio :—  
What, Jessica !—thou shalt not gormandise,  
As thou hast done with me :—What, Jessica !—  
And sleep and snore, and rend apparel out ;—  
Why, Jessica, I say !

*Laun.* Why, Jessica !

*Shy.* Who bids thee call ? I do not bid thee call.

*Laun.* Your worship was wont to tell me that I could  
do nothing without bidding.

*Enter JESSICA.*

*Jes.* Call you ? what is your will ? 10

*Shy.* I am bid forth to supper, Jessica :  
There are my keys. But wherefore should I go ?  
I am not bid for love ; they flatter me :  
But yet I'll go in hate, to feed upon

Lean, rent and beggar'd by the strumpet wind !

*Sal.* Here comes Lorenzo : more of this hereafter. 20

*Enter* LORENZO.

*Lor.* Sweet friends, your patience for my long abode ;  
Not I, but my affairs, have made you wait :  
When you shall please to play the thieves for wives,  
I'll watch as long for you then. Approach ;  
Here dwells my father Jew Ho ! who's within ?

*Enter* JESSICA, *above, in boy's clothes.*

*Jes.* Who are you ? Tell me, for more certainty,  
Albeit I'll swear that I do know your tongue.

*Lor.* Lorenzo, and thy love.

*Jes.* Lorenzo, certain, and my love indeed,  
For who love I so much ? And now who knows 30  
But you, Lorenzo, whether I am yours ?

*Lor.* Heaven and thy thoughts are witness that thou art.

*Jes.* Here, catch this casket ; it is worth the pains.  
I am glad 'tis night, you do not look on me,  
For I am much ashamed of my exchange :  
But love is blind and lovers cannot see  
The pretty follies that themselves commit ;  
For if they could, Cupid himself would blush  
To see me thus transformed to a boy.

*Lor.* Descend, for you must be my torch-bearer. 40

*Jes.* What, must I hold a candle to my shames ?  
They in themselves, good sooth, are too too light.  
Why, 'tis an office of discovery, love ;  
And I should be obscured.

*Lor.* So are you, sweet,

Even in the lovely garnish of a boy.

But come at once ;

For the close night doth play the runaway,

And we are stay'd for at Bassanio's feast.

*Jes.* I will make fast the doors, and gild myself  
With some more ducats, and be with you straight. 50

*[Exit above.]*

*Gra.* Now, by my hood, a Gentile and no Jew.

*Im.* Beshrew me but I love her heartily ;

For she is wise, if I can judge of her,

And fair she is, if that mine eyes be true,

And true she is, as she hath proved herself,

And therefore, like herself, wise, fair and true,

Shall she be placed in my constant soul.

*Enter JESSICA, below.*

What, art thou come ? On, gentlemen ; away !

Our masquing mates by this time for us stay.

*[Exit with Jessica and Salvarino.]*

*Enter ANTONIO.*

*Ant.* Who's there ? 60

*Gra.* Signior Antonio !

*Ant.* Fie, fie, Gratiano ! where are all the rest ?

'Tis nine o'clock : our friends all stay for you.

No masque to-night : the wind is come about ;

Bassanio presently will go aboard :

I have sent twenty out to seek for you.

*Gra.* I am glad on 't : I desire no more delight  
Than to be under sail and gone to-night. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE VII. *Belmont. A room in PORTIA's house.*

*Flourish of cornets. Enter PORTIA, with the PRINCE OF MOROCCO, and their trains.*

*Por.* Go draw aside the curtains and discover  
The several caskets to this noble prince.  
Now make your choice.

*Mor.* The first, of gold, who this inscription bears,  
'Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire ;'  
The second, silver, which this promise carries,  
'Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves ;'  
This third, dull lead, with warning all as blunt,  
'Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath.'  
How shall I know if I do choose the right ? 10

*Por.* The one of them contains my picture, prince :  
If you choose that, then I am yours withal.

*Mor.* Some god direct my judgement ! Let me see ;  
I will survey the inscriptions back again.  
What says this leaden casket ?  
'Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath.'  
Must give : for what ? for lead ? hazard for lead ?  
This casket threatens. Men that hazard all  
Do it in hope of fair advantages :

A golden mind stoops not to shows of dross ; 20  
I'll then nor give nor hazard aught for lead.

What says the silver with her virgin hue ?  
'Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.'  
As much as he deserves ! Pause there, Morocco,  
And weigh thy value with an even hand :  
If thou be'st rated by thy estimation,  
Thou dost deserve enough ; and yet enough  
May not extend so far as to the lady :

And yet to be afeard of my deserving  
Were but a weak disabling of myself. 30  
As much as I deserve ! Why, that's the lady :  
I do in birth deserve her, and in fortunes,  
In graces and in qualities of breeding ;  
But more than these, in love I do deserve.  
What if I stray'd no further, but chose here ?  
Let's see once more this saving graved in gold ;  
'Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire.'  
Why, that's the lady ; all the world desires her ;  
From the four corners of the earth they come,  
To kiss this shrine, this mortal-breathing saint : 40  
The Hyrcanian deserts and the vasty wilds  
Of wide Arabia are as throughfares now  
For princes to come view fair Portia :  
The watery kingdom, whose ambitious head  
Spits in the face of heaven, is no bar  
To stop the foreign spirits, but they come,  
As o'er a brook, to see fair Portia.  
One of these three contains her heavenly picture.  
Is't like that lead contains her ? 'Twere damnation  
To think so base a thought : it were too gross 50  
To rib her cerecloth in the obscure grave.  
Or shall I think in silver she's immured,  
Being ten times undervalued to tried gold ?  
O sinful thought ! Never so rich a gem  
Was set in worse than gold. They have in England  
A coin that bears the figure of an angel  
Stamped in gold, but that's insculp'd upon ;  
But here an angel in a golden bed  
Lies all within. Deliver me the key :  
Here do I choose, and thrive I as I may ! 60  
*Por.* There, take it, prince ; and if my form lie there,

Then I am yours. *[He unlocks the golden casket.]*

*Mar.* O hell ! what have we here ?

A carrion Death, within whose empty eye

There is a written scroll ! I'll read the writing.

*[Reads.]* All that glisters is not gold ;

Often have you heard that told :

Many a man his life hath sold

But my outside to beho'd :

Gilded tombs do worms infold.

Had you been as wise as bold,

70

Young in limbs, in judgement old,

Your answer had not been in-croll'd :

Fare you well : your suit is cold.

Cold, indeed ; and labour lost :

Then, farewell, heat, and welcome, frost !

Portia, adieu. I have too grieved a heart

To take a tedious leave : thus losers part.

*[Exit Portia, with casket. Enter Portia with cornets.]*

*Portia.* A gentle riddance. Draw the curtains, go.

Let all of his complexion choose me so. *[Exit Portia.]*

#### SCENE VIII. Venice. A street.

*Enter SALARINO and SOLANIO*

*Solanio.* Why, man, I saw Bassanio under sail :

With him is Gratiano gone along ;

And in their ship I am sure Lorenzo is not.

*Salarino.* The villain Jew with outcries raised the duke,  
Who went with him to search Bassanio's ship.

*Salarino.* He came too late, the ship was under sail :  
But there the duke was given to understand  
That in a gondola were seen together

Lorenzo and his amorous Jessica :

Besides, Antonio certified the duke

10

They were not with Bassanio in his ship.

*Solan.* I never heard a passion so confused,

So strange, outrageous, and so variable,

As the dog Jew did utter in the streets :

'My daughter ! O my ducats ! O my daughter

Fled with a Christian ! O my Christian ducats !

Justice ! the law ! my ducats, and my daughter !

A sealed bag, two sealed bags of ducats,

Of double ducats, stolen from me by my daughter !

And jewels, two stones, two rich and precious stones, 20

Stolen by my daughter ! Justice ! and the girl ;

She hath the stones upon her, and the ducats.'

*Solan.* Why, all the boys in Venice follow him,

Crying, his stones, his daughter, and his ducats.

*Solan.* Let good Antonio look he keep his day,

Or he shall pay for this.

*Solan.*

*Marr.*, well remember'd.

I reason'd with a Frenchman yester day,

Who told me, in the narrow seas that part

The French and English, there miscarried

A vessel of our country richly fraught

30

I thought upon Antonio when he told me ;

And wish'd in silence that it were not his.

*Solan.* You were best to tell Antonio what you hear ;

Yet do not suddenly, for it may grieve him.

*Solan.* A kinder gentleman treads not the earth.

I saw Bassanio and Antonio part :

Bassanio told him he would make some speed

Of his return : he answer'd, 'Do not so ;

Slubber not business for my sake, Bassanio,

But stay the very riping of the time ;

40



And for the Jew's bond which he hath of me,  
 Let it not enter in your mind of love :  
 Be merry, and employ your chiefest thoughts  
 To courtship and such fair ostents of love  
 As shall conveniently become you there :  
 And even there, his eye being big with tears,  
 Turning his face, he put his hand behind him,  
 And with affection wondrous sensible  
 He wrung Bassanio's hand ; and so they parted.

*Solan.* I think he only loves the world for him, 50  
 I pray thee, let us go and find him out  
 And quicken his embraced heaviness  
 With some delight or other.

*Salar.* Do we so. *[Recount.]*

SCENE IX. *Belmont. A room in PORTIA's house.*

*Enter NERISSA with a Servitor.*

*Ner.* Quick, quick, I pray thee ; draw the curtain  
straight :  
 The Prince of Arragon hath ta'en his oath.  
 And comes to his election presently.

*Flourish of cornets. Enter the PRINCE OF ARRAGON,  
 PORTIA, and their trains.*

*Por.* Behold, there stand the caskets, noble prince .  
 If you choose that wherein I am contain'd,  
 Straight shall our nuptial rites be solemnized :  
 But if you fail, without more speech, my lord,  
 You must be gone from hence immediately.

*Ar.* I am enjoin'd by oath to observe three things :  
First, never to unfold to any one 10  
Which casket 'twas I chose ; next, if I fail  
Of the right casket, never in my life  
To woo a maid in way of marriage :  
Lastly,  
If I do fail in fortune of my choice,  
Immediately to leave you and be gone.

*Por.* To these injunctions every one doth swear  
That comes to hazard for my worthless self.

*Ar.* And so have I address'd me. Fortune now  
To my heart's hope ! Gold ; silver ; and base lead. 20  
'Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath.'  
You shall look fairer, ere I give or hazard.  
What says the golden chest ? ha ! let me see :  
'Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire.  
What many men desire ! that 'many' may be meant  
By the fool multitude, that choose by show,  
Not learning more than the fond eye doth teach ;  
Which pries not to the interior, but, like the martlet,  
Builds in the weather on the outward wall,  
Even in the force and road of casualty. 30  
I will not choose what many men desire,  
Because I will not jump with common spirits  
And rank me with the barbarous multitudes.  
Why, then to thee, thou silver treasure-house ;  
Tell me once more what title thou dost bear :  
'Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves :'  
And well said too ; for who shall go about  
To cozen fortune and be honourable  
Without the stamp of merit ? Let none presume  
To wear an undeserved dignity. 40  
O, that estates, degrees and offices

Were not derived corruptly, and that clear honour  
 Were purchased by the merit of the wearer !  
 How many then should cover that stand bare !  
 How many be commanded that command !  
 How much low peasantry would then be glean'd  
 From the true seed of honour ! and how much honour  
 Pick'd from the chaff and ruin of the times  
 To be new-varnish'd ! Well, but to my choice :  
 'Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.' 50  
 I will assume desert. Give me a key for this,  
 And instantly unlock my fortunes here.

*[He opens the silver casket.]*

*Por.* Too long a pause for that which you find there.

*Ar.* What's here ? the portrait of a blinking idiot,  
 Presenting me a schedule ! I will read it.  
 How much unlike art thou to Portia !  
 How much unlike my hopes and my deservings !  
 'Who chooseth me shall have as much as he deserves.'  
 Did I deserve no more than a fool's head ?  
 Is that my prize ? are my deserts no better ? 60

*Por.* To offend, and judge, are distinct offices  
 And of opposed natures.

*Ar.* What is here ?

*[Re-enter Bassanio.]* The fire seven times tried this :  
 Seven times tried that judgement is,  
 That did never choose amiss.  
 Some there be that shadows kiss ;  
 Such have but a shadow's bliss :  
 There be fools alive, I wis,  
 Silver'd o'er ; and so was this.  
 Take what wife you will to bed, 70  
 I will ever be your head :  
 So be gone : you are sped.

Still more fool I shall appear  
By the time I linger here :  
With one fool's head I came to woo,  
But I go away with two.  
Sweet, adieu. I'll keep my oath,  
Patiently to bear my wroth.

[*Exeunt Arragon and train.*

*Por.* Thus hath the candle singed the moth.  
O, these deliberate fools ! when they do choose, 80  
They have the wisdom by their wit to lose.

*Ner.* The ancient saying is no heresy,  
Hanging and wiving goes by destiny.

*Por.* Come, draw the curtain, Nerissa.

*Enter a Servant.*

*Serv.* Where is my lady ?

*Por.* Here : what would my lord ?

*Serv.* Madam, there is alighted at your gate  
A young Venetian, one that comes before  
To signify the approaching of his lord ;  
From whom he bringeth sensible regrets,  
To wit, besides commends and courteous breath, 90  
Gifts of rich value. Yet I have not seen  
So likely an ambassador of love :  
A day in April never came so sweet,  
To show how costly summer was at hand,  
As this fore-spurrer comes before his lord.

*Por.* No more, I pray thee : I am half afeard  
Thou wilt say anon he is some kin to thee,  
Thou spend'st such high-day wit in praising him.  
Come, come, Nerissa ; for I long to see  
Quick Cupid's post that comes so mannerly. 100

*Ner.* Bassanio, lord Love, if thy will it be ! [*Exeunt.*

## ACT III.

## SCENE I. Venice. A street.

Enter SOLANIO and SALARINO.

*Solan.* Now, what news on the Rialto ?

*Salar.* Why, yet it lives there unchecked that Antonio hath a ship of rich lading wrecked on the narrow seas the Goodwins, I think they call the place ; a very dangerous flat and fatal, where the carcasses of many a tall ship lie buried, as they say, if my gossip Report be an honest woman of her word.

*Solan.* I would she were as lying a gossip in that as ever knapped ginger or made her neighbours believe she wept for the death of a third husband. But it is true, without any slips of prolixity or crossing the plain highway of talk, that the good Antonio, the honest Antonio,—O that I had a title good enough to keep his name company !—

*Salar.* Come, the full stop.

*Solan.* Ha ! what sayest thou ? why, the end is, he hath lost a ship.

*Salar.* I would it might prove the end of his losses.

*Solan.* Let me say 'amen' betimes, lest the devil cross my prayer, for here he comes in the likeness of a Jew.

*So let it be*  
Enter SHYLOCK.

How now, Shylock ! what news among the merchants ?

*Shy.* You knew, none so well, none so well as you, o my daughter's flight.

*Salar.* That's certain : I, for my part, knew the tailor that made the wings she flew withal.

*Solan.* And Shylock, for his own part, knew the bird was fledged ; and then it is the complexion of them all to leave the dam. *nature*

*Shy.* She is damned for it.

*Salar.* That's certain if the devil may be her judge.

*Shy.* My own flesh and blood to rebel ! 30

*Solan.* Out upon it, old carrion ! *mass of flesh* rebels it at these years ?

*Shy.* I say, my daughter is my flesh and blood.

*Salar.* There is more difference between thy flesh and hers than between jet and ivory ; more between your bloods than there is between red wine and rhenish. *sweet one* But tell us, do you hear whether Antonio have had any loss at sea or no ?

*Shy.* There I have another bad match : a bankrupt, a prodigal, *ruined of his life* who dare scarce show his head on the Rialto ; a beggar, that was used to come so smug upon the mart ; let him look to his bond : he was wont to call me usurer ; *unkind* let him look to his bond : he was wont to lend money for a Christian courtesy ; let him look to his bond. 43

*Salar.* Why, I am sure, if he forfeit, *hang* thou wilt not take his flesh : what's that good for ? *sympathy for other*

*Shy.* To bait fish withal : if it will feed nothing else, it will feed my revenge. He hath disgraced me, and hindered me half a million ; laughed at my losses, mocked at my gains, scorned my nation, *tried to spoil* thwarted my bargains, cooled my friends, heated mine enemies ; and what's his reason ? I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes ? hath not a Jew hands organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions ? fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is ? If you prick us, do we not bleed ? if you tickle us, do we not laugh ? if you poison us, do we not die ? and if you

wrong us, shall we not revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that. If a Jew wrong a Christian, what is his humility? Revenge. If a Christian wrong a Jew, what should his sufferance be by Christian example? Why, revenge. The <sup>wickedness</sup> villany you teach me, I will execute, and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction. *I will increase my wickedness* 64  
*(which you taught me)*

*Enter a Servant.*

*Serv.* Gentlemen, my master Antonio is at his house and desires to speak with you both.

*Salar.* We have been up and down to seek him.

*Enter TUBAL*

*Solan* Here comes another of the tribe: a third cannot be matched, unless the devil himself turn Jew.

*[Exeunt Solan., Salar., and Servant.]*

*Shy.* How now, Tubal! what news from Genoa? hast thou found my daughter?

*Tub.* I often came where I did hear of her, but cannot find her. 73

*Shy.* Why, there, there, there, there! a diamond gone, cost me two thousand ducats in Frankfort! The curse never fell upon our nation till now; I never felt it till now: two thousand ducats in that; and other precious, precious jewels. I would my daughter were dead at my foot, and the jewels in her ear! would she were hearsed at my foot, and the ducats in her coffin! No news of them? Why, so: and I know not what's spent in the search: why, thou loss upon loss! the thief gone with so much, and so much to find the thief; and no satisfaction, no revenge: nor no

ill luck stirring but what lights on my shoulders; no sighs but of my breathing ; no tears but of my shedding.

*Tub.* Yes, other men have ill luck too : Antonio, as I heard in Genoa,—

*Shy.* What, what, what ? ill luck, ill luck ?

*Tub.* Hath an argosy cast away, coming from Tripolis.

*Shy.* I thank God, I thank God. Is't true, is't true ? 90

*Tub.* I spoke with some of the sailors that escaped the wreck.

*Shy.* I thank thee, good Tubal : good news, good news ! ha, ha ! where ? in Genoa ?

*Tub.* Your daughter spent in Genoa, as I heard, in one night fourscore ducats.

*Shy.* Thou stickest a dagger in me : I shall never see my gold again : fourscore ducats at a sitting ! fourscore ducats !

*Tub.* There came divers of Antonio's creditors in my company to Venice, that swear he cannot choose but break.

*Shy.* I am very glad of it : I'll plague him ; I'll torture him : I am glad of it. 103

*Tub.* One of them showed me a ring that he had of your daughter for a monkey.

*Shy.* Out upon her ! Thou torturest me, Tubal : it was my turquoise: I had it of Leah when I was a bachelor: I would not have given it for a wilderness of monkeys.

*Tub.* But Antonio is certainly undone.

*Shy.* Nay, that's true, that's very true. Go, Tubal, fee me an officer; bespeak him a fortnight before. I will have the heart of him, if he forfeit; for, where he out of Venice, I can make what merchandise I will. Go, go, Tubal, and meet me at our synagogue ; go, good Tubal; at our synagogue, Tubal.

C. P. BROWN<sup>[Exeunt]</sup>

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C U D D A P A H.



SCENE II. *Belmont. A room in PORTIA'S house.*

*Enter BASSANIO, PORTIA, GRATIANO, NERISSA, and Attendants.*

*Por.* I pray you, tarry: pause a day or two  
 Before you hazard ; for, in choosing wrong,  
 I lose your company : therefore forbear awhile.  
 There's something tells me, but it is not love,  
 I would not lose you ; and you know yourself,  
 Hate counsels not in such a quality.  
 But lest you should not understand me well,—  
 And yet a maiden hath no tongue but thought,—  
 I would detain you here some month or two  
 Before you venture for me. I could teach you 10  
 How to choose right, but I am then forsworn ;  
 So will I never be : so may you miss me ;  
 But if you do, you'll make me wish a sin,  
 That I had been forsworn. Beshrew your eyes,  
 They have o'erlook'd me and divided me ;  
 One half of me is yours, the other half yours,  
 Mine own, I would say ; but if mine, then yours,  
 And so all yours. O, these naughty times  
 Put bars between the owners and their rights !  
 And so, though yours, not yours. Prove it so, 20  
 Let fortune go to hell for it, not I.  
 I speak too long ; but 'tis to peize the time,  
 To eke it, and to draw it out in length,  
 To stay you from election.

*Bass.* Let me choose ;  
 For as I am, I live upon the rack.

*Por.* Upon the rack, Bassanio ! then confess  
 What treason there is mingled with your love.

*Bass.* None but that ugly treason of mistrust,  
Which makes me fear the enjoying of my love :  
There may as well be amity and life 30  
'Tween snow and fire, as treason and my love.

*Por.* Ay, but I fear you speak upon the rack,  
Where men enforced do speak anything.

*Bass.* Promise me life, and I'll confess the truth.

*Por.* Well then, confess and live.

*Bass.* 'Confess' and 'love'  
Had been the very sum of my confession :  
O happy torment, when my torturer  
Doth teach me answers for deliverance !  
But let me to my fortune and the caskets.

*Por.* Away, then ! I am lock'd in one of them : 40  
If you do love me, you will find me out.  
Nerissa and the rest, stand all aloof.  
Let music sound while he doth make his choice ;  
Then, if he lose, he makes a swan like end,  
Fading in music : that the comparison  
May stand more proper, my eye shall be the stream  
And watery death bed for him. He may win ;  
And what is music then ? Then music is  
Even as the flourish when true subjects bow  
To a new crowned monarch ; such it is 50  
As are those dulcet sounds in break of day  
That creep into the dreaming bridegroom's ear  
And summon him to marriage. Now he goes,  
With no less presence, but with much more love,  
Than young Alcides, when he did redeem  
The virgin tribute paid by howling Troy  
To the sea monster : I stand for sacrifice ;  
The rest aloof are the Dardanian wives,  
With bleared visages, come forth to view

The issue of the exploit. Go, Hercules ! 60  
 Live thou, I live : with much much more dismay  
 I view the fight than thou that makest the fray.

*Music, whilst BASSANIO comments on the caskets to himself.*

SONG.

Tell me where is fancy bred,  
 Or in the heart or in the head ?  
 How begot, how nourished ?

Reply, reply.

It is engender'd in the eyes,  
 With gazing fed ; and fancy dies  
 In the cradle where it lies.

Let us all ring fancy's knell : 70

I'll begin it,—Ding, dong, bell.

*All.* Ding, dong, bell.

*Bass.* So may the outward shows be least themselves :  
 The world is still deceived with ornament.  
 In law, what plea so tainted and corrupt  
 But, being season'd with a gracious voice,  
 Obscures the show of evil ? In religion,  
 What damned error, but some sober brow  
 Will bless it and approve it with a text,  
 Hiding the grossness with fair ornament ? 80  
 There is no vice so simple but assumes  
 Some mark of virtue on his outward parts :  
 How many cowards, whose hearts are all as false  
 As stairs of sand, wear yet upon their chins  
 The beards of Hercules and frowning Mars,  
 Who, inward search'd, have livers white as milk ;

And these assume but valour's excrement  
To render them redoubted ! Look on beauty,  
And you shall see 'tis purchased by the weight ;  
Which therein works a miracle in nature, 90  
Making them lightest that wear most of it :  
So are those crisped snaky golden locks  
Which make such wanton gambols with the wind,  
Upon supposed fairness, often known  
To be the dowry of a second head,  
The skull that bred them in the sepulchre.  
Thus ornament is but the guiled shore  
To a most dangerous sea ; the beauteous scarf  
Veiling an Indian beauty ; in a word,  
The seeming truth which cunning times put on 100  
To entrap the wisest. Therefore, thou gaudy gold,  
Hard food for Midas, I will none of thee ;  
Nor none of thee, thou pale and common drudge  
'Tween man and man : but thou, thou meagre lead,  
Which rather threatenest than does promise aught,  
Thy plainness moves me more than eloquence ;  
And here choose I : joy be the consequence !

*Por. [Aside]* How all the other passions fleet to air,  
As doubtful thoughts, and rash-embraced despair,  
And shuddering fear, and green-eyed jealousy ! 110  
O love,  
Be moderate ; allay thy ecstasy ;  
In measure rain thy joy ; scant this excess.  
I feel too much thy blessing : make it less,  
For fear I surfeit.

*Bass.* What find I here ?

*[Opening the leaden casket.]*

Fair Portia's counterfeit ! What demi-god  
Hath come so near creation ? Move these eyes ?

Or whether, riding on the balls of mine,  
Seem they in motion ? Here are sever'd lips,  
Parted with sugar breath : so sweet a bar 120  
Should sunder such sweet friends. Here in her hairs  
The painter plays the spider and hath woven  
A golden mesh to entrap the hearts of men  
Faster than gnats in cobwebs : but her eyes,—  
How could he see to do them ? having made one,  
Methinks it should have power to steal both his  
And leave itself unfurnish'd. Yet look, how far  
The substance of my praise doth wrong this shadow  
In underprizing it, so far this shadow  
Doth limp behind the substance. Here's the scroll, 130  
The continent and summary of my fortune.

[*Reads*] You that choose not by the view,  
Chance as fair and choose as true !  
Since this fortune falls to you,  
Be content and seek no new.  
If you be well pleased with this  
And hold your fortune for your bliss,  
Turn you where your lady is  
And claim her with a loving kiss.

A gentle scroll. Fair lady, by your leave ; 140  
I come by note, to give and to receive.  
Like one of two contending in a prize,  
That thinks he hath done well in people's eyes,  
Hearing applause and universal shout,  
Giddy in spirit, still gazing in a doubt  
Whether those peals of praise be his or no ;  
So, thrice fair lady, stand I, even so ;  
As doubtful whether what I see be true,  
Until confirm'd, sign'd, ratified by you.

*Por* You see me, Lord Bassanio, where I stand, 150

Such as I am : though for myself alone  
I would not be ambitious in my wish,  
To wish myself much better ; yet, for you  
I would be trebled twenty times myself ;  
A thousand times more fair, ten thousand times  
More rich ;  
That only to stand high in your account,  
I might in virtues, beauties, livings, friends,  
Exceed account ; but the full sum of me  
Is sum of nothing, which, to term in gross, 160  
Is an unlesson'd girl, unschool'd, unpractised ;  
Happy in this, she is not yet so old  
But she may learn ; happier then in this,  
She is not bred so dull but she can learn ;  
Happiest of all in that her gentle spirit  
Commits itself to yours to be directed,  
As from her lord, her governor, her king.  
Myself and what is mine to you and yours  
Is now converted : but now I was the lord  
Of this fair mansion, master of my servants, 170  
Queen o'er myself ; and even now, but now,  
This house, these servants and this same myself  
Are yours, my lord : I give them with this ring ;  
Which when you part from, lose, or give away,  
Let it presage the ruin of your love  
And be my vantage to exclaim on you.

*Pass.* Madam, you have bereft me of all words,  
Only my blood speaks to you in my veins ;  
And there is such confusion in my powers,  
As, after some oration fairly spoke 180  
By a beloved prince, there doth appear  
Among the buzzing pleased multitude ;  
Where every something, being blent together,



Turns to a wild of nothing, save of joy,  
Express'd and not express'd. But when this ring  
Parts from this finger, then parts life from hence :  
O, then be bold to say Bassanio's dead !

*Ner.* My lord and lady, it is now our time,  
That have stood by and seen our wishes prosper,  
To cry, good joy : good joy, my lord and lady ! 190

*Gra.* My lord Bassanio and my gentle lady,  
I wish you all the joy that you can wish ;  
For I am sure you can wish none from me :  
And when your honours mean to solemnize  
The bargain of your faith, I do beseech you,  
Even at that time I may be married too.

*Bass.* With all my heart, so thou canst get a wife.

*Gra.* I thank your lordship, you have got me one.  
My eyes, my lord, can look as swift as yours :  
You saw the mistress, I beheld the maid ; 200  
You loved, I loved ; for intermission  
No more pertains to me, my lord, than you.  
Your fortune stood upon the casket there,  
And so did mine too, as the matter falls ;  
For wooing here until I sweat again,  
And swearing till my very roof was dry  
With oaths of love, at last, if promise last,  
I got a promise of this fair one here  
To have her love, provided that your fortune  
Achieved her mistress.

*Por.* Is this true, Nerissa ? 210

*Ner.* Madam, it is, so you stand pleased withal.

*Bass.* And do you, Gratiano, mean good faith ?

*Gra.* Yes, faith, my lord.

*Bass.* Our feast shall be much honour'd in your marriage.

*Gra.* But who comes here ? Lorenzo and his infidel ?



What, and my old Venetian friend Solanio ?

*Enter LORENZO, JESSICA, and SOLANIO, a Messenger from Venice.*

*Bass.* Lorenzo and Solanio, welcome hither ;  
If that the youth of my new interest here  
Have power to bid you welcome. By your leave,  
I bid my very friends and countrymen, 220  
Sweet Portia, welcome.

*Por.* So do I, my lord :  
They are entirely welcome.

*Lor.* I thank your honour. For my part, my lord,  
My purpose was not to have seen you here ;  
But meeting with Solanio by the way,  
He did intreat me, past all saying nay,  
To come with him along.

*Solan.* I did, my lord ;  
And I have reason for it. Signor Antonio  
Commends him to you. [*Gives Bassanio a letter.*]

*Bass.* Ere I ope his letter,  
I pray you, tell me how my good friend doth. 230

*Solan.* Not sick, my lord, unless it be in mind ;  
Nor well, unless in mind : his letter there  
Will show you his estate.

*Grat.* Nerissa, cheer yon stranger : bid her welcome.  
Your hand, Solanio ; what's the news from Venice ?  
How doth that royal merchant, good Antonio ?  
I know he will be glad of our success ;  
We are the Jasons, we have won the fleece.

*Solan.* I would you had won the fleece that he hath  
lost.

*Por.* There are some shrewd contents in yon same  
paper, 240

That steals the colour from Bassanio's cheek :  
Some dear friend dead , else nothing in the world  
Could turn so much the constitution  
Of any constant man. What, worse and worse !  
With leave, Bassanio ; I am half yourself,  
And I must freely have the half of anything  
That this same paper brings you.

*Bass.* O sweet Portia,  
Here are a few of the unpleasant'st words  
That ever blotted paper ! Gentle lady,  
When I did first impart my love to you, 250  
I freely told you, all the wealth I had  
Ran in my veins. I was a gentleman ;  
And then I told you true · and yet, dear lady,  
Rating myself at nothing, you shall see  
How much I was a braggart. When I told you  
My state was nothing, I should then have told you  
That I was worse than nothing ; for, indeed,  
I have engaged myself to a dear friend,  
Engaged my friend to his mere enemy,  
To feed my means. Here is a letter, lady ; 260  
The paper as the body of my friend,  
And every word in it a gaping wound,  
Issuing life-blood. But is it true, Solanio ?  
Have all his ventures fail'd ? What, not one hit ?  
From Tripolis, from Mexico and England,  
From Lisbon, Barbary and India ?  
And not one vessel 'scape the dreadful touch  
Of merchant-marring rocks ?

*Solan.* Not one, my lord.  
Besides, it should appear, that if he had  
The present money to discharge the Jew, 270

He would not take it. Never did I know  
A creature, that did bear the shape of man,  
So keen and greedy to confound a man :  
He plies the duke at morning and at night,  
And doth impeach the freedom of the state,  
If they deny him justice : twenty merchants.  
The duke himself, and the magnificoes  
Of greatest port, have all persuaded with him ;  
But none can drive him from the envious plea  
Of forfeiture, of justice and his bond. 280

*Jes.* When I was with him I have heard him swear  
To Tubal and to Chus, his countrymen,  
That he would rather have Antonio's flesh  
Than twenty times the value of the sum  
That he did owe him : and I know, my lord,  
If law, authority and power deny not,  
It will go hard with poor Antonio.

*Por.* Is it your dear friend that is thus in trouble ?

*Bass.* The dearest friend to me, the kindest man,  
The best condition'd and unwearied spirit 290  
In doing courtesies, and one in whom  
The ancient Roman honour more appears  
Than any that draws breath in Italy.

*Por.* What sum owes he the Jew ?

*Bass.* For me three thousand ducats.

*Por.* What, no more ?

Pay him six thousand, and deface the bond ;  
Double six thousand, and then treble that,  
Before a friend of this description  
Shall lose a hair through Bassanio's fault.  
First go with me to church and call me wife, 300  
And then away to Venice to your friend ;  
For never shall you lie by Portia's side

With an unquiet soul. You shall have gold  
To pay the petty debt twenty times over :  
When it is paid, bring your true friend along.  
My maid Nerissa and myself meantime  
Will live as maids and widows. Come, away !  
For you shall hence upon your wedding day :  
Bid your friends welcome, show a merry cheer ;  
Since you are dear bought, I will love you dear. 310  
But let me hear the letter of your friend.

*Bass.* [*Re-enters*] Sweet Bassanio, my ships have all miscarried, my creditors grow cruel, my estate is very low, my bond to the Jew is forfeit; and since in paying it, it is impossible I should live, all debts are cleared between you and I, if I might but see you at my death. Notwithstanding, use your pleasure : if your love do not persuade you to come, let not my letter.

*Por.* O love, dispatch all business, and be gone !

*Bass.* Since I have your good leave to go away, 320

I will make haste : but, till I come again,

No bed shall e'er be guilty of my stay,

No rest be interposer 'twixt us twain. [*Exeunt.*

### SCENE III. *Venice. A street.*

*Enter SHYLOCK, SALARINO, ANTONIO, and Gaoler.*

*Shy.* Gaoler, look to him : tell not me of mercy ;  
This is the fool that lent out money gratis :  
Gaoler, look to him.

*Ant.* Hear me yet, good Shylock.

*Shy.* I'll have my bond ; speak not against my bond :  
I have sworn an oath that I will have my bond.  
Thou call'dst me dog before thou hadst a cause ;

But, since I am a dog, beware my fangs :  
The duke shall grant me justice. I do wonder,  
Thou naughty gaoler, that thou art so fond  
To come abroad with him at his request. 10

*Ant.* I pray thee, here me speak.

*Shy.* I'll have my bond ; I will not hear thee speak ;  
I'll have my bond ; and therefore speak no more.  
I'll not be made a soft and dull-eyed fool,  
To shake the head, relent, and sigh, and yield  
To Christian intercessors. Follow not ;  
I'll have no speaking : I will have my bond. [Exit.

*Salar.* It is the most impenetrable cur  
That ever kept with men.

*Ant.* Let him alone :  
I'll follow him no more with bootless prayers. 20  
He seeks my life ; his reason well I know :  
I oft deliver'd from his forfeitures  
Many that have at times made moan to me ;  
Therefore he hates me.

*Salar.* I am sure the duke  
Will never grant this forfeiture to hold.

*Ant.* The duke cannot deny the course of law :  
For the commodity that strangers have  
With us in Venice, if it be denied,  
Will much impeach the justice of his state ;  
Since that the trade and profit of the city 30  
Consisteth of all nations. Therefore, go :  
These griefs and losses have so bated me,  
That I shall hardly spare a pound of flesh  
To-morrow to my bloody creditor.  
Well, gaoler, on Pray God, Bassanio come  
To see me pay his debt, and then I care not ! [Exeunt.

SCENE IV. *Belmont. A room in PORTIA'S house.*

*Enter* PORTIA, NERISSA, LORENZO, JESSICA,  
and BALTHASAR.

*Lor.* Madam, although I speak it in your presence,  
You have a noble and a true conceit  
Of god-like amity ; which appears most strongly  
In bearing thus the absence of your lord.  
But if you knew to whom you show this honour,  
How true a gentleman you send relief,  
How dear a lover of my lord your husband,  
I know you would be prouder of the work  
Than customary bounty can enforce you.

*Por.* I never did repent for doing good, 10  
Nor shall not now : for in companions  
That do converse and waste the time together,  
Whose souls do bear an equal yoke of love,  
There must be needs a like proportion  
Of lineaments, of manners and of spirit ;  
Which makes me think that this Antonio,  
Being the bosom lover of my lord,  
Must needs be like my lord. If it be so,  
How little is the cost I have bestow'd  
In purchasing the semblance of my soul 20  
From out the state of hellish misery !  
This comes too near the praising of myself ;  
Therefore no more of it : hear other things.  
Lorenzo, I commit into your hands  
The husbandry and manage of my house  
Until my lord's return : for mine own part,  
I have toward heaven breathed a secret vow  
To live in prayer and contemplation,

Only attended by Nerissa here,  
Until her husband and my lord's return : 30  
There is a monastery two miles off ;  
And there will we abide. I do desire you  
Not to deny this imposition ;  
The which my love and some necessity  
Now lays upon you.

*Lor.* Madam, with all my heart ;  
I shall obey you in all fair commands.

*Por.* My people do already know my mind,  
And will acknowledge you and Jessica  
In place of Lord Bassanio and myself.  
And so farewell, till we shall meet again. 40

*Lor.* Fair thoughts and happy hours attend on you !

*Jes.* I wish your ladyship all heart's content.

*Por.* I thank you for your wish, and am well pleased  
To wish it back on you : fare you well, Jessica.

[*Exeunt Jessica and Lorenzo.*]

Now, Balthasar, {  
As I have ever found thee honest-true,  
So let me find thee still. Take this same letter,  
And use thou all the endeavour of a man  
In speed to Padua : see thou render this  
Into my cousin's hand, Doctor Bellario ; 50  
And, look, what notes and garments he doth give thee,  
Bring them, I pray thee, with imagined speed  
Unto the tranect, to the common ferry . . .  
Which trades to Venice. Waste no time in words,  
But get thee gone : I shall be there before thee.

*Balth.* Madam, I go with all convenient speed. [Exit.]

*Por.* Come on, Nerissa ; I have work in hand  
That you yet know not of : we'll see our husbands  
Before they think of us.

*Ner.* Shall they see us ?

*Por.* They shall, Nerissa ; but in such a habit, 60  
That they shall think we are accomplished  
With that we lack. I'll hold thee any wager,  
When we are both accoutred like young men,  
I'll prove the prettier fellow of the two,  
And wear my dagger with the braver grace,  
And speak between the change of man and boy  
With a reed voice, and turn two mincing steps  
Into a manly stride, and speak of frays  
Like a fine bragging youth, and tell quaint lies,  
How honourable ladies sought my love, 70  
Which I denying, they fell sick and died ;  
I could not do withal ; than I'll repent,  
And wish, for all that, that I had not kill'd them ;  
And twenty of these puny lies I'll tell,  
That men shall swear I have discontinued school  
Above a twelvemonth. I have within my mind  
A thousand raw tricks of these bragging Jacks,  
Which I will practise.

*Ner.* Why, shall we turn to men ?

*Por.* Fie, what a question's that,  
If thou wert near a lewd interpreter ! 80  
But come, I'll tell thee all my whole device  
When I am in my coach, which stays for us  
At the park gate ; and therefore haste away,  
For we must measure twenty miles to-day. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. *The same. A garden*

*Enter LAUNCELOT and JESSICA.*

*Laun.* Yes, truly ; for, look you, the sins of the father



are to be laid upon the children : therefore, I promise ye, I fear you. I was always plain with you, and so now I speak my agitation of the matter : therefore be of good cheer, for truly I think you are damned. There is but one hope in it that can do you any good ; and that is but a kind of bastard hope neither.

*Jes.* And what hope is that, I pray thee ?

*Laun.* Marry, you may partly hope that your father got you not, that you are not the Jew's daughter. 10

*Jes.* That were a kind of bastard hope, indeed : so the sins of my mother should be visited upon me.

*Laun.* Truly then I fear you are damned both by father and mother : thus when I shun Scylla, your father, I fall into Charybdis, your mother : well, you are gone both ways.

*Jes.* I shall be saved by my husband ; he hath made me a Christian. 18

*Laun.* Truly, the more to blame he : we were Christians enow before ; e'en as many as could well live, one by another. This making of Christians will raise the price of hogs : if we grow all to be pork-eaters, we shall not shortly have a rasher on the coals for money.

*Enter LORENZO.*

*Jes.* I'll tell my husband, Launcelot, what you say : here he comes.

*Lor.* I shall grow jealous of you shortly, Launcelot, if you thus get my wife into corners.

*Jes.* Nay, you need not fear us, Lorenzo : Launcelot and I are out. He tells me flatly, there is no mercy for me in heaven, because I am a Jew's daughter : and he says, you are no good member of the commonwealth, for in

converting Jews to Christians, you raise the price of pork. 32

*Lor.* Go in, sirrah; bid them prepare for dinner.

*Laun.* That is done, sir; they have all stomachs.

*Lor.* Goodly Lord, what a wit snapper are you! then bid them prepare dinner.

*Laun.* That is done too, sir; only 'cover' is the word

*Lor.* Will you cover then, sir?

*Laun.* Not so, sir, neither; I know my duty. 39

*Lor.* Yet more quarrelling with occasion! Wilt thou show the whole wealth of thy wit in an instant? I pray thee, understand a plain man in his plain meaning: go to thy fellows; bid them cover the table, serve in the meat, and we will come in to dinner.

*Laun.* For the table, sir, it shall be served in; for the meat, sir, it shall be covered; for your coming in to dinner, sir, why, let it be as humours and conceits shall govern. [*Exit.*]

*Lor.* O dear discretion, how his words are suited!

The fool hath planted in his memory  
An army of good words; and I do know 50  
A many fools, that stand in better place,  
Garnish'd like him, that for a tricksy word  
Defy the matter. How cheer'st thou, Jessica?  
And now, good sweet, say thy opinion,  
How dost thou like the Lord Bassanio's wife?

*Jes.* Past all expressing. It is very meet  
The Lord Bassanio live an upright life;  
For, having such a blessing in his lady,  
He finds the joys of heaven here on earth;  
And if on earth he do not mean it, then 60  
In reason he should never come to heaven.  
Why, if two gods should play some heavenly match

And on the wager lay two earthly women,  
And Portia one, there must be something else  
Pawn'd with the other, for the poor rude world  
Hath not her fellow.

*Lor.* Even such a husband  
Hast thou of me as she is for a wife.

*Jes.* Nay, but ask my opinion too of that.

*Lor.* I will anon : first, let us go to dinner.

*Jes.* Nay, let me praise you while I have a stomach. 70

*Lor.* No, pray thee, let it serve for table talk ;  
Then, howsoe'er thou speak'st, 'mong other things  
I shall digest it.

*Jes.* Well, I'll set you forth. [*Exeunt.*]

## ACT IV.

SCENE I. *Venciee. A court of justice.*

*Enter the DUKE, the Magnificoes, ANTONIO, BASSANIO  
GRATIANO, SALERIO, and others.*

*Duke.* What, is Antonio here ?

*Ant.* Ready, so please your grace,

*Duke.* I am sorry for thee : thou art come to answer  
A stony adversary, an inhuman wretch  
Uncapable of pity, void and empty  
From any dram of mercy.

*Ant.* I have heard  
Your grace hath ta'en great pains to qualify  
His rigorous course ; but since he stands obdurate *stubb*  
And that no lawful means can carry me  
Out of his envy's reach, I do oppose  
My patience to his fury, and am arm'd

To suffer, with a quietness of spirit,  
The very tyranny and rage of his.

*Duke.* Go one, and call the Jew into the court.

*Saler.* He is ready at the door : he comes, my lord.

*Enter SHYLOCK*

*Duke.* Make room, and let him stand before our face.  
Shylock, the world thinks, and I think so too,  
That thou but lead'st this fashion of thy malice  
To the last hour of act ; and then 'tis thought  
Thou'lt show thy mercy and remorse more strange  
Than is thy strange apparent cruelty ;  
And where thou now exact'st the penalty,  
Which is a pound of this poor merchant's flesh,  
Thou will not only loose the forfeiture,  
But, touch'd with human gentleness and love  
Forgive a moiety of the principal ;  
Glancing an eye of pity on his losses,  
That have of late so huddled on his back,  
Enow to press a royal merchant down  
And pluck commiseration of his state  
From brassy bosoms and rough hearts of flint,  
From stubborn Turks and Tartars, never train'd  
To offices of tender courtesy  
We all expect a gentle answer, Jew.

30

*Shy.* I have possess'd your grace of what I purpose :  
And by our holy Sabbath have I sworn  
To have the due and forfeit of my bond :  
If you deny it, let the danger light  
Upon your charter and your city's freedom.  
You'll ask me, why I rather choose to have  
A weight of carrion flesh than to receive

40

Three thousand ducats : I'll not answer that :  
But, say, it is my humour : is it answer'd ?  
What if my house be troubled with a rat  
And I be pleased to give ten thousand ducats  
To have it <sup>poison</sup> banned ? What, are you answer'd yet ?  
Some men there are love not a gaping pig ;  
Some, that are mad if they behold a cat ;  
For affection, *Marta* *man*  
Mistress of passion, sways it to the mood 50  
Of what it likes or loathes. Now, for your answer :  
As there is no firm reason to be render'd,  
Why he cannot abide a gaping pig ;  
Why he, a harmless necessary cat ;  
So can I give no reason, nor I will not,  
More than a lodged hate and a certain loathing  
I bear Antonio, that I follow thus  
A losing suit against him. Are you answer'd ?

*Bass.* This is no answer, thou unfeeling man,  
To excuse the current of thy cruelty. 60

*Shy.* I am not bound to please thee with my answers

*Bass.* Do all men kill the things they do not love ?

*Shy.* Hates any man the thing he would not kill ?

*Bass.* Every offence is not a hate at first.

*Shy.* What, would'st thou have a serpent sting thee  
twice ?

*Ant.* I pray you, think you question with the Jew :  
You may as well go stand upon the beach  
And bid the main flood bate his usual height ;  
You may as well use question with the wolf  
Why he hath made the ewe bleat for the lamb ; 70  
You may as well forbid the mountain pines  
To wag their high tops and to make no noise,  
When they are fretten with the gusts of heaven ;

You may as well do any thing most hard,  
As seek to soften that—than which what's harder?—  
His Jewish heart: therefore, I do beseech you,  
Make no more offers, use no further means,  
But with all brief and plain conveniency  
Let me have judgement and the Jew his will.

*Bass.* For thy three thousand ducats here is six. 80

*Shy.* If every ducat in six thousand ducats  
Were in six parts and every part a ducat,  
I would not draw them; I would have my bond.

*Duke.* How shalt thou hope for mercy, rendering none?

*Shy.* What judgement shall I dread, doing no wrong?  
You have among you many a purchased slave,  
Which, like your asses and your dogs and mules,  
You use in abject and in slavish parts,  
Because you bought them: shall I say to you,  
Let them be free, marry them to your heirs? 90  
Why sweat they under burthens? let their beds  
Be made as soft as yours and let their palates  
Be season'd with such viands? You will answer  
'The slaves are ours:' so do I answer you:  
The pound of flesh, which I demand of him,  
Is dearly bought; 'tis mine and I will have it.  
If you deny me, fie upon your law!  
There is no force in the decrees of Venice.  
I stand for judgement: answer; shall I have it?

*Duke.* Upon my power I may dismiss this court, 100  
Unless Bellario, a learned doctor,  
Whom I have sent for to determine this,  
Come here to-day.

*Saler.* My lord, here stays without  
A messenger with letters from the doctor,  
New come from Padua.

*Duke.* Bring us the letters ; call the messenger.

*Bass.* Good cheer, Antonio ! What, man, courage yet !  
The Jew shall have my flesh, blood, bones and all,  
Ere thou shalt lose for me one drop of blood.

*Ant.* I am a tainted wether of the flock, 110  
Meetest for death : the weakest kind of fruit  
Drops earliest to the ground ; and so let me :  
You cannot better be employ'd, Bassanio,  
Than to live still and write mine epitaph.

*Enter NERISSA, dressed like a lawyer's clerk.*

*Duke.* Came you from Padua, from Bellario ?

*Ner.* From both, my lord. Bellario greets your grace.

*[Presenting a letter]*

*Bass.* Why dost thou whet thy knife so earnestly ?

*Shy.* To cut the forfeiture from that bankrupt there.

*Gra.* Not on thy sole, but on thy soul, harsh Jew,  
Thou makest thy knife keen ; but no metal can, 120  
No, not the hangman's axe, bear half the keenness  
Of thy sharp envy. Can no prayers pierce thee ?

*Shy.* No, none that thou hast wit enough to make.

*Gra.* O, be thou damn'd, inexorable dog !  
And for thy life let justice be accused.  
Thou almost makest me waver in my faith  
To hold opinion with Pythagoras,  
That souls of animals infuse themselves  
Into the trunks of men : thy currish spirit  
Govern'd a wolf, who, hang'd for human slaughter, 130  
Even from the gallows did his fell soul fleet,  
And, whilst thou lay'st in thy unhallow'd dam,  
Infused itself in thee ; for thy desires  
Are wolvis, bloody, starved and ravenous.

*Shy.* Till thou canst rail the seal from off my bond,  
Thou but offend'st thy lungs to speak so loud :  
Repair thy wit, good youth, or it will fall  
To cureless ruin. I stand here for law.

*Duke.* This letter from Bellario doth commend  
A young and learned doctor to our court. 140  
Where is he ?

*Ner.* He attendeth here hard by,  
To know your answer, whether you'll admit him.

*Duke.* With all my heart. Some three or four of you  
Go give him courteous conduct to this place. *Exeunt*  
Meantime the court shall hear Bellario's letter.

*Clerk.* [*Lies*] Your grace shall understand that at the receipt of your letter I am very sick : but in the instant that your messenger came, in loving visitation was with me a young doctor of Rome ; his name is Balthasar. I acquainted him with the cause in controversy between the Jew and Antonio the merchant : we turned o'er many books together : he is furnished with my opinion ; which, bettered with his own learning, the greatness whereof I cannot enough commend, comes with him, at my importunity, to fill up your grace's request in my stead. I beseech you, let his lack of years be no impediment to let him lack a reverend estimation ; for I never knew so young a body with so old a head. I leave him to your gracious acceptance, whose trial shall better publish his commendation.

*Duke.* You hear the learn'd Bellario, what he writes : 161  
And here, I take it, is the doctor come.

*Enter* PORTIA, *dressed like a doctor of laws.*

Give me your hand. Come you from old Bellario ?



*Por.* I did, my lord.

*Duke.*

You are welcome : take your place.

Are you acquainted with the difference

That holds this present question in the court ?

*Por.* I am informed thoroughly of the cause.

Which is the merchant here, and which the Jew ?

*Duke.* Antonio and old Shylock, both stand forth.

*Por.* Is your name Shylock ?

*Shy.*

Shylock is my name.

*Por.* Of a strange nature is the suit you follow ; 170

Yet in such rule that the Venetian law

Cannot impugn you as you do proceed.

You stand within his danger, do you not ?

*Ant.* Ay, so he says.

*Por.*

Do you confess the bond ?

*Ant.* I do.

*Por.* Then must the Jew be merciful.

*Shy.* On what compulsion must I ? tell me that.

*Por.* The quality of mercy is not strain'd,

It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven

Upon the place beneath : it is twice blest ;

It blesseth him that gives and him that takes : 180

'Tis mightiest in the mightiest : it becomes

The throned monarch better than his crown ;

His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,

The attribute to awe and majesty,

Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings ;

But mercy is above this sceptred sway ;

It is enthroned in the hearts of kings,

It is an attribute to God himself :

And earthly power doth then show likest God's

When mercy seasons justice. Therefore, Jew, 190

Though justice be thy plea, consider this,

That, in the course of justice, none of us  
Should see salvation : we do pray for mercy ;  
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render  
The deeds of mercy. I have spoke thus much  
To mitigate the justice of thy plea ;  
Which if thou follow, this strict court of Venice  
Must needs give sentence 'gainst the merchant there.

*Shy.* My deeds upon my head ! I crave the law,  
The penalty and forfeit of my bond. 200

*Por.* Is he not able to discharge the money ?

*Bass.* Yes, here I tender it for him in the court ;  
Yea, twice the sum : if that will not suffice,  
I will be bound to pay it ten times o'er,  
On forfeit of my hands, my head, my heart:  
If this will not suffice, it must appear  
That malice bears down truth. And I beseech you,  
Wrest once the law to your authority :  
To do a great right, do a little wrong,  
And curb this cruel devil of his will. 210

*Por.* It must not be ; there is no power in Venice  
Can alter a decree established :  
'Twill be recorded for a precedent,  
And many an error by the same example  
Will rush into the state: it cannot be

*Shy.* A Daniel come to judgement ! yea, a Daniel !  
O wise young judge, how I do honour thee !

*Por.* I pray you, let me look upon the bond.

*Shy.* Here 'tis, most reverend doctor, here it is.

*Por.* Shylock, there's thrice thy money offer'd thee. 220

*Shy.* An oath, an oath, I have an oath in heaven :  
Shall I lay perjury upon my soul ?  
No, not for Venice.

*Por.* Why, this bond is forfeit ;

And lawfully by this the Jew may claim  
A pound of flesh, to be by him cut off  
Nearest the merchant's heart. Be merciful :  
Take thrice thy money ; bid me tear the bond.

*Shy.* When it is paid according to the tenour.  
It doth appear you are a worthy judge ;  
You know the law, your exposition 230  
Hath been most sound : I charge you by the law,  
Whereof you are a well-deserving pillar,  
Proceed to judgement : by my soul I swear  
There is no power in the tongue of man  
To alter me : I stay here on my bond.

*Ant.* Most heartily I do beseech the court  
To give the judgement.

*Por.* Why then, thus it is :  
You must prepare your bosom for his knife.

*Shy.* O noble judge ! O excellent young man !

*Por.* For the intent and purpose of the law 240  
Hath full relation to the penalty,  
Which here appeareth due upon the bond.

*Shy.* 'Tis very true : O wise and upright judge !  
How much more elder art thou than thy looks !

*Por.* Therefore lay bare your bosom.

*Shy.* Ay, his breast:  
So says the bond : doth it not, noble judge ?  
'Nearest his heart :' those are the very words.

*Por.* It is so. Are there balance here to weigh  
The flesh ?

*Shy.* I have them ready.

*Por.* Have by some surgeon, Shylock, on your charge,  
To stop his wounds, lest he do bleed to death.

*Shy.* Is it so nominated in the bond ?

*Por.* It is not so express'd : but what of that ?

'Twere good you do so much for charity.

*Shy* I cannot find it ; 'tis not in the bond.

*Por* You, merchant, have you any thing to say ?

*Ant* But little : I am arm'd and well prepared.

Give me your hand, Bassanio : fare you well !

Grieve not that I am fallen to this for you ;

For herein Fortune shows herself more kind 260

Than is her custom : it is still her use

To let the wretched man outlive his wealth,

To view with hollow eye and wrinkled brow

An age of poverty ; from which lingering penance

Of such a misery doth she cut me off.

Commend me to your honourable wife :

Tell her the process of Antonio's end ;

Say how I loved you, speak me fair in death ;

And, when the tale is told, bid her be judge

Whether Bassanio had not once a love. 270

Repent but you that you shall lose your friend,

And he repents not that he pays your debt ;

For if the Jew do cut but deep enough,

I'll pay it presently with all my heart.

*Bass.* Antonio, I am married to a wife

Which is as dear to me as life itself ;

But life itself, my wife, and all the world,

Are not with me esteem'd above thy life :

I would lose all, ay, sacrifice them all

Here to this devil, to deliver you. 280

*Por.* Your wife would give you little thanks for that,  
If she were by, to hear you make the offer.

*Gra.* I have a wife, whom, I protest, I love :

I would she were in heaven, so she could

Entreat some power to change this currish Jew.

*Ner.* 'Tis well you offer it behind her back ;

The wish would make else an unquiet house.

*Shy.* Those be the Christian husbands. I have a daughter;  
Would any of the stock of Barrabas  
Had been her husband rather than a Christian! [*Aside.* 290  
We trifle time : I pray thee, pursue sentence.

*Por.* A pound of that same merchant's flesh is thine :  
The court awards it, and the law doth give it.

*Shy.* Most rightful judge !

*Por.* And you must cut this flesh from off his breast :  
The law allows it, and the court awards it.

*Shy.* Most learned judge ! A sentence ! Come, prepare !

*Por.* Tarry a little ; there is something else.  
 This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood ;  
 The words expressly are 'a pound of flesh :'  
 Take then thy bond, take thou thy pound of flesh ;      300  
 But, in the cutting it, if thou dost shed  
 One drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods  
 Are, by the laws of Venice, confiscate  
 Unto the state of Venice.

*Gra.* O upright judge !    *Mark, Jew:* O learned judge !

*Shy.* Is that the law ?

*For.* Thyself shalt see the act :  
For, as thou urges justice, be assured  
Thou shalt have justice, more than thou desirest.

*Gra.* O learned judge ! Mark, Jew : a learned judge !

*Shy.* I take his offer, then ; pay the bond thrice      310  
And let the Christian go.

*Bass.* Here is the money.

*Por.* Soft !

The Jew shall have all justice ; soft ! no haste :  
He shall have nothing but the penalty.

*Gra.* O Jew ! an upright judge, a learned judge !

*Por.* Therefore prepare thee to cut off the flesh.

Shed thou no blood, nor cut thou less nor more  
But just a pound of flesh : if thou cut'st more  
Or less than a just pound, be it but so much  
As makes it light or heavy in the substance 320  
Or the division of the twentieth part  
Of one poor scruple, nay, if the scale do turn  
But in the estimation of a hair,  
Thou diest and all thy goods are confiscate.

*Gra.* A second Daniel, a Daniel, Jew !

Now, infidel, I have you on the hip.

*Por.* Why doth the Jew pause ? take thy forfeiture.

*Shy.* Give me my principal, and let me go.

*Bass.* I have it ready for thee ; here it is.

*Por.* He hath refused it in the open court : 330  
He shall have merely justice and his bond.

*Gra.* A Daniel, still say I, a second Daniel !  
I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word.

*Shy.* Shall I not have barely my principal ?

*Por.* Thou shalt have nothing but the forfeiture,  
To be so taken at thy peril, Jew.

*Shy.* Why, then the devil give him good of it !  
I'll stay no longer question.

*Por.* Tarry, Jew :  
The law hath yet another hold on you.

It is enacted in the laws of Venice, 340  
If it be proved against an alien

That by direct or indirect attempts

He seek the life of any citizen,

The party 'gainst the which he doth contrive

Shall seize one half his goods ; the other half

Comes to the privy coffer of the state ;

And the offender's life lies in the mercy

Of the duke only, 'gainst all other voice.

In which predicament, I say, thou stand'st ;  
For it appears, by manifest proceeding, 350  
That indirectly and directly too  
Thou hast contrived against the very life  
Of the defendant ; and thou hast incurr'd  
The danger formerly by me rehearsed.  
Down therefore and beg mercy of the duke.

*Gra.* Beg that thou mayst have leave to hang thyself :  
And yet, thy wealth being forfeit to the state,  
Thou hast not left the value of a cord ;  
Therefore thou must be hang'd at the state's charge.

*Duke.* That thou shalt see the difference of our spirit. 360  
I pardon thee thy life before thou ask it :  
For half thy wealth, it is Antonio's ;  
The other half comes to the general state,  
Which humbleness may drive unto a fine.

*Por.* Ay, for the state, not for Antonio.

*Shy.* Nay, take my life and all ; pardon not that  
You take my house when you do take the prop  
That doth sustain my house ; you take my life  
When you do take the means whereby I live.

*P. r.* What mercy can you render him, Antonio ? 370

*Gra.* A halter gratis ; nothing else, for God's sake.

*Ant.* So please my lord the duke and all the court  
To quit the fine for one half of his goods,  
I am content ; so he will let me have  
The other half in use, to render it,  
Upon his death, unto the gentleman  
That lately stole his daughter :  
Two things provided more, that, for this favour,  
He presently become a Christian ;  
The other, that he do record a gift, 380  
Here in the court, of all he dies possess'd,

Unto his son Lorenzo and his daughter.

*Duke.* He shall do this, or else I do recant

The pardon that I late pronounced here.

*Per.* Art thou contented, Jew ? what dost thou say?

*Shy.* I am content.

*Por.* Clerk, draw a deed of gift.

*Shy.* I pray you, give me leave to go from hence ;

I am not well : send the deed after me,

And I will sign it.

*Duke.* Get thee gone, but do it.

*Gra.* In christening shalt thou have two godfathers: 390

Had I been judge, thou shouldst have had ten more,

To bring thee to the gallows, not the font. [*Exit Shylock.*]

*Duke.* Sir, I entreat you home with me to dinner.

*Por.* I humbly do desire your grace of pardon :

I must away this night toward Padua,

And it is meet I presently set forth.

*Duke.* I am sorry that your leisure serves you not.

Antonio, gratify this gentleman,

For, in my mind, you are much bound to him.

[*Exeunt Duke and his train.*]

*Bass.* Most worthy gentleman, I and my friend 400

Have by your wisdom been this day acquitted

Of grievous penalties ; in lieu whereof,

Three thousand ducats, due unto the Jew,

We freely cope your courteous pains withal.

*Ant.* And stand indebted, over and above,

In love and service to you evermore.

*Por.* He is well paid that is well satisfied ;

And I, delivering you, am satisfied

And therein do account myself well paid :

My mind was never yet more mercenary. 410

I pray you, know me when we meet again :



I wish you well, and so I take my leave.

*Bass.* Dear sir, of force I must attempt you further :  
Take some remembrance of us, as a tribute,  
Not as a fee : grant me two things, I pray you,  
Not to deny me, and to pardon me.

*Por* You press me far, and therefore I will yield.

[*To Ant.*] Give me your gloves, I'll wear them for your  
sake ;

[*To Bass.*] And, for your love, I'll take this ring from you:  
Do not draw back your hand ; I'll take no more ; 420  
And you in love shall not deny me this.

*Bass.* This ring, good sir, alas, it is a trifle !  
I will not shame myself to give you this.

*Por.* I will have nothing else but only this ;  
And now methinks I have a mind to it.

*Bass.* There's more depends on this than on the value.  
The dearest ring in Venice will I give you,  
And find it out by proclamation :  
Only for this, I pray you, pardon me.

*Por.* I see, sir, you are liberal in offers : 430  
You taught me first to beg ; and now methinks  
You teach me how a beggar should be answer'd.

*Bass.* Good sir, this ring was given me by my wife ;  
And when she put it on, she made me vow  
That I should neither sell nor give nor lose it.

*Por.* That 'scuse serves many men to save their gifts.  
An if your wife be not a mad-woman,  
And know how well I have deserved the ring,  
She would not hold out enemy for ever,  
For giving it to me. Well, peace be with you ! 440

[*Exeunt Portia and Nerissa.*]

*Ant.* My Lord Bassanio, let him have the ring :  
Let his deservings and my love withal

Be valued 'gainst your wife's commandment.

*Bass.* Go, Gratiano, run and overtake him ;  
Give him the ring, and bring him, if thou canst,  
Unto Antonio's house : away ! make haste. [*Exit Gratiano.*  
Come, you and I will thither presently;  
And in the morning early will we both  
Fly toward Belmont : come, Antonio. [*Exeunt.* 449

SCENE II. *The same. A street.*

*Enter* PORTIA and NERISSA.

*Por.* Inquire the Jew's house out, give him this deed  
And let him sign it : we'll away to-night  
And be a day before our husbands home :  
This deed will be well welcome to Lorenzo.

*Enter* GRATIANO.

*Gra.* Fair sir, you are well o'erta'en :  
My Lord Bassanio upon more advice  
Hath sent you here this ring, and doth entreat  
Your company at dinner.

*Por.* That cannot be :  
His ring I do accept most thankfully :  
And so, I pray you, tell him : furthermore, 10  
I pray you, show my youth old Shylock's house.

*Gra.* That will I do.

*Ner.* Sir, I would speak with you.  
[*Aside to Por.*] I'll see if I can get my husband's ring,  
Which I did make him swear to keep for ever.

*Por.* [*Aside to Ner*] Thou mayst, I warrant. We shall  
have old swearing

That they did give the rings away to men ;  
But we'll outface them, and outswear them too.

[*Aloud*] Away ! make haste : thou know'st where I will  
tarry.

*Ner.* Come, good sir, will you show me to this house?

[*Ereunt.*]

## ACT V.

SCENE I *Belmont. Avenue to PORTIA'S house.*

*Enter LORENZO and JESSICA.*

*Lor.* The moon shines bright : in such a night as this,  
When the sweet wind did gently kiss the trees  
And they did make no noise, in such a night  
Troilus methinks mounted the Trojan walls  
And sigh'd his soul toward the Grecian tents,  
Where Cressid lay that night.

*Jes.* In such a night  
Did Thisbe fearfully o'ertrip the dew  
And saw the lion's shadow ere himself  
And ran dismay'd away.

*Lor.* In such a night  
Stood Dido with a willow in her hand  
Upon the wild sea banks and waft her love  
To come again to Carthage.

10

*Jes.* In such a night  
Medea gather'd the enchanted herbs  
That did renew old Æson.

*Lor.* In such a night  
Did Jessica steal from the wealthy Jew  
And with an unthrift love did run from Venice

As far as Belmont.

*Jes.* In such a night  
Did young Lorenzo swear he loved her well,  
Stealing her soul with many vows of faith  
And ne'er a true one.

*Lor.* In such a night 20  
Did pretty Jessica, like a little shrew,  
Slander her love, and he forgave it her.

*Jes.* I would out-night you, did no body come ;  
But, hark, I hear the footing of a man.

*Enter* STEPHANO.

*Lor.* Who comes so fast in silence of the night ?

*Steph.* A friend.

*Lor.* A friend ! what friend ? your name, I pray you,  
friend ?

*Steph.* Stephano is my name ; and I bring word  
My mistress will before the break of day  
Be here at Belmont : she doth stray about 30  
By holy crosses, where she kneels and prays  
For happy wedlock hours.

*Lor.* Who comes with her ?

*Steph.* None but a holy hermit and her maid.  
I pray you, is my master yet return'd ?

*Lor.* He is not, nor we have not heard from him.  
But go we in, I pray thee, Jessica,  
And ceremoniously let us prepare  
Some welcome for the mistress of the house.

*Enter* LAUNCELOT.

*Laun.* Sola, sola ! wo ha, ho ! sola, sola !

*Lor.* Who calls ?

*Laun.* Sola ! did you see Master Lorenzo and Mistress Lorenzo ? sola, sola !

*Lor.* Leave hollaing, man : here.

*Laun.* Sola ! where ? where ?

*Lor.* Here.

*Laun.* Tell him there's a post come from my master, with his horn full of good news : my master will be here ere morning. [*Exit.*

*Lor.* Sweet soul, let's in, and there expect their coming. And yet no matter : why should we go in ? 50

My friend Stephano, signify, I pray you,  
Within the house, your mistress is at hand ;  
And bring your music forth into the air. [*Exit Stephano.*

How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank !

Here will we sit and let the sounds of music  
Creep in our ears : soft stillness and the night  
Become the touches of sweet harmony.

Sit, Jessica. Look how the floor of heaven  
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold :  
There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st 60

But in his motion like an angel sings,  
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins ;  
Such harmony is in immortal souls ;  
But whilst this muddy vesture of decay  
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.

*Enter Musicians.*

Come, ho ! and wake Diana with a hymn :  
With sweetest touches pierce your mistress' ear  
And draw her home with music. [*Music.*

*Jes.* I am never merry when I hear sweet music.

*Lor.* The reason is, your spirits are attentive : 70  
For do but note a wild and wanton herd  
Or race of youthful and unhandled colts,  
Fetching mad bounds, bellowing and neighing loud,  
Which is the hot condition of their blood ;  
If they but hear perchance a trumpet sound,  
Or any air of music touch their ears,  
You shall perceive them make a mutual stand,  
Their savage eyes turn'd to a modest gaze  
By the sweet power of music : therefore the poet  
Did feign that Orpheus drew trees, stones and floods ; 80  
Since nought so stockish, hard and full of rage,  
But music for the time doth change his nature.  
The man that hath no music in himself,  
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,  
Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils ;  
The motions of his spirit are dull as night  
And his affections dark as Erebus :  
Let no such man be trusted. Mark the music.

*Enter PORTIA and NERISSA.*

*Por.* That light we see is burning in my hall.  
How far that little candle throws his beams ! 90  
So shines a good deed in a naughty world.

*Ner.* When the moon shone, we did not see the candle.

*Por.* So doth the greater glory dim the less :  
A substitute shines brightly as a king  
Until a king be by, and then his state  
Empties itself, as doth an inland brook  
Into the main of waters. Music ! hark !

*Ner.* It is your music, madam, of the house.

*Por.* Nothing is good, I see, without respect :

Methinks it sounds much sweeter than by day. 100

*Ner.* Silence bestows that virtue on it, madam.

*Por.* The crow doth sing as sweetly as the lark  
When neither is attended, and I think  
The nightingale, if she should sing by day,  
When every goose is cackling, would be thought  
No better a musician than the wren.  
How many things by season season'd are  
To their right praise and true perfection !  
Peace, ho ! the moon sleeps with Endymion  
And would not be awaked. [*Music ceases.*

*Lor.* That is the voice, 110  
Or I am much deceived, of Portia.

*Por.* He knows me as the blind man knows the cuckoo,  
By the bad voice.

*Lor.* Dear lady, welcome home.

*Por.* We have been praying for our husbands' healths,  
Which speed, we hope, the better for our words.  
Are they return'd ?

*Lor.* Madam, they are not yet ;  
But there is come a messenger before,  
To signify their coming.

*Por.* Go in, Nerissa ;  
Give order to my servants that they take  
No note at all of our being absent hence ; 120  
Nor you, Lorenzo ; Jessica, nor you [*A tucket sounds.*

*Lor.* Your husband is at hand ; I hear his trumpet :  
We are no tell-tales, madam ; fear you not.

*Por.* This night methinks is but the daylight sick ;  
It looks a little paler : 'tis a day,  
Such as the day is when the sun is hid.

*Enter BASSANIO, ANTONIO, GRATIANO, and their followers.*

*Bass.* We should hold day with the Antipodes,  
If you would walk in absence of the sun.

*Por.* Let me give light, but let me not be light ;  
For a light wife doth make a husband, 130  
And never be Bassanio so for me :  
But God sort all ! You are welcome home, my lord.

*Bass.* I thank you, madam. Give welcome to my friend.  
This is the man, this is Antonio,  
To whom I am so infinitely bound.

*Por.* You should in all sense be much bound to him,  
For, as I hear, he was much bound for you.

*Ant.* No more than I am well acquitted of.

*Por.* Sir, you are very welcome to our house :  
It must appear in other ways than words,  
Therefore I scant this breathing courtesy.

*Gra.* [*To Ner.*] By yonder moon I swear you do me  
wrong ;  
In faith, I gave it to the judge's clerk.

*Por.* A quarrel, ho, already ! what's the matter ?

*Gra.* About a hoop of gold, a paltry ring  
That she did give to me, whose posy was  
For all the world like cutler's poetry  
Upon a knife, 'Love me, and leave me not.'

*Ner.* What talk you of the posy or the value ?  
You swore to me, when I did give it you, 150  
That you would wear it till your hour of death  
And that it should lie with you in your grave :  
Though not for me, yet for your vehement oaths,  
You should have been respective and have kept it.  
Gave it a judge's clerk ! no, God's my judge,  
The clerk will ne'er wear hair on's face that had it.



*Gra.* He will, an if he live to be a man.

*Ner.* Ay, if a woman live to be a man.

*Gra.* Now, by this hand, I gave it to a youth,  
A kind of boy, a little scrubbed boy, 160  
No higher than thyself, the judge's clerk,  
A prating boy, that begg'd it as a fee :  
I could not for my heart deny it him.

*Por.* You were to blame, I must be plain with you,  
To part so slightly with your wife's first gift ;  
A thing stuck on with oaths upon your finger  
And so riveted with faith unto your flesh.  
I gave my love a ring and made him swear  
Never to part with it; and here he stands ;  
I dare be sworn for him he would not leave it 170  
Nor pluck it from his finger, for the wealth  
That the world masters. Now, in faith, Gratiano,  
You give your wife too unkind a cause of grief :  
An 'twere to me, I should be mad at it.

*Bass.* [*Aside*] Why, I were best to cut my left hand off  
And swear I lost the ring defending it.

*Gra.* My Lord Bassanio gave his ring away  
Unto the judge that begg'd it and indeed  
Deserved it too ; and then the boy, his clerk,  
That took some pains in writing, he begg'd mine ; 180  
And neither man nor master would take aught  
But the two rings.

*Por.* What ring gave you, my lord ?  
Not that, I hope, which you received of me.

*Bass.* If I could add a lie unto a fault,  
I would deny it ; but you see my finger  
Hath not the ring upon it ; it is gone.

*Por.* Even so void is your false heart of truth.  
By heaven, I will ne'er come in your bed

Until I see the ring.

*Ner.* Nor I in yours

Till I again see mine.

*Bass.* Sweet Portia, 190

If you did know to whom I gave the ring,  
If you did know for whom I gave the ring  
And would conceive for what I gave the ring  
And how unwillingly I left the ring,  
When nought would be accepted but the ring,  
You would abate the strength of your displeasure.

*Por.* If you had known the virtue of the ring,  
Or half her worthiness that gave the ring,  
Or your own honour to contain the ring,  
You would not then have parted with the ring. 200  
What man is there so much unreasonable,  
If you had pleased to have defended it  
With any terms of zeal, wanted the modesty  
To urge the thing held as a ceremony?  
*Nerissa* teaches me what to believe :  
I'll die for't but some woman had the ring.

*Bass.* No, by my honour, madam, by my soul,  
No woman had it, but a civil doctor,  
Which did refuse three thousand ducats of me  
And begg'd the ring ; the which I did deny him 210  
And suffer'd him to go displeased away ;  
Even he that did uphold the very life  
Of my dear friend. What should I say, sweet lady ?  
I was enforced to send it after him ;  
I was beset with shame and courtesy ;  
My honour would not let ingratitude  
So much besmear it. Pardon me, good lady ;  
For, by these blessed candles of the night,  
Had you been there, I think you would have begg'd

The ring of me to give the worthy doctor. 220

*Por.* Let not that doctor e'er come near my house :  
Since he hath got the jewel that I loved,  
And that which you did swear to keep for me,  
I will become as liberal as you :  
I'll not deny him any thing I have ;  
Lie not a night from home ; watch me like Argus :  
If you do not, if I be left alone,  
Now, by mine honour, which is yet mine own,  
I'll have that doctor for my bedfellow.

*Ner.* And I his clerk ; therefore be well advised 230  
How you do leave me to mine own protection.

*Gr.* Well, do you so : let not me take him, then ;  
For if I do, I'll mar the young clerk's pen.

*Ant.* I am the unhappy subject of these quarrels.

*Por.* Sir, grieve not you ; you are welcome notwithstanding.

*Bass.* Portia, forgive me this enforced wrong :  
And, in the hearing of these many friends,  
I swear to thee, even by thine own fair eyes,  
Wherein I see myself—

*Por.* Mark you but that !  
In both my eyes he doubly sees himself ; 240  
In each eye, one : swear by your double self,  
And there's an oath of credit.

*Bass.* Nay, but hear me :  
Pardon this fault, and by my soul I swear  
I never more will break an oath with thee.

*Ant.* I once did lend my body for his wealth ;  
Which, but for him that had your husband's ring,  
Had quite miscarried : I dare be bound again,  
My soul upon the forfeit, that your lord  
Will never more break faith advisedly.

*Por.* Then you shall be his surety. Give him this 250  
And bid him keep it better than the other.

*Ant.* Here, Lord Bassanio ; swear to keep this ring.

*Bass.* By heaven, it is the same I gave the doctor !

*Por.* I had it of him. You are all amazed :  
Here is a letter ; read it at your leisure ;  
It comes from Padua, from Bellario :  
There you shall find that Portia was the doctor,  
Nerissa there her clerk : Lorenzo here  
Shall witness I set forth as soon as you  
And even but now return'd ; I have not yet  
Enter'd my house. Antonio, you are welcome :  
And I have better news in store for you  
Than you expect : unseal this letter soon ;  
There you shall find three of your argosies  
Are richly come to harbour suddenly :  
You shall not know by what strange accident  
I chanced on this letter.

*Ant.* I am dumb.

*Bass.* Were you the doctor and I knew you not ?  
Sweet doctor, you shall be my bedfellow :  
When I am absent, then lie with my wife. 270

*Ant.* Sweet lady, you have given me life and living ;  
For here I read for certain that my ships  
Are safely come to road.

*Por.* How now, Lorenzo !  
My clerk hath some good comforts too for you.

Ner. Ay, and I'll give them him without a fee.  
There do I give to you and Jessica,  
From the rich Jew, a special deed of gift,  
After his death, of all he dies possess'd of.

*Lor.* Fair ladies, you drop manna in the way  
Of starved people.

*Por.*

It is almost morning,

280

And yet I am sure you are not satisfied  
Of these events at full. Let us go in ;  
And charge us there upon inter'gatories,  
And we will answer all things faithfully.

*Gia.* Let it be so : the first inter'gatory  
That my Nerissa shall be sworn on is,  
Whether till the next night she had rather stay,  
Or go to bed now, being two hours to day :  
Well, while I live I'll fear no other thing  
So sore as keeping safe Nerissa's ring.

[*Exeunt.*]



## NOTES.

### ACT I. SCENE I.

1. **I know not why I am so sad,** (i) The sadness is intended to strike the keynote of his misfortune, imminent misfortune— 'coming events cast their shadows before' (ii) Such a mood is attributed only for dramatic effect (iii) It may be due to anxiety regarding business, for all his "fortunes are at sea." (iv) We are to infer that Bassanio has already hinted about intended adventure, and that the unwelcome prospect of separation from a dear friend makes him sad (lines 119-21) (v) May be he has an innate tendency to be sad

I hold the world but as the world Gratino.

A stage, where everyman must play apart,

And mine a sad one. (line 77-9)

Whatever may be the *cause*, the sadness strikes the keynote of the play and is dramatically effective.

2. **It**, Sadness;

3. **came by**, Got; acquired;

5. **I am to**, I am yet to; I have still to.

6, 7. **And...myself**, Sadness makes me so dull-witted that I have great difficulty to know myself; **much ado**, great difficulty.

8. **tossing on the ocean**, (i) His ships are tossing

on the ocean and, his mind too appears to toss with them in anxiety. (ii) His mind is fully occupied with thoughts of his ships sailing on high seas.

9. **argosies**, large merchant vessels (esp. of Venice); **portly**, (i) laden heavily with merchandise (ii) majestic. (This meaning is apt); **sail**. (i) a group of ships (ii) the act of sailing.

10. **signiors and rich burghers**, persons that command respect and rich citizens; **flood**, sea

11. **pageants**, shows; moving spectacles or exhibitions.

12. **overpeer**, look down upon; **petty traffickers**, little ships.

13. **cur'sy**: curtsy. As the large ships (argosies) pass by them, the petty traffickers (small trading vessels) rock and duck, and appear to salute the big ones, just as the ordinary men salute the rich citizens as they pass by.

14. **they**, the large ships; **fly by them**, sail speedily by their (small ships) side; **woven wings**, sails.

15. **venture**, a commercial enterprise involving risk; **such venture forth**, such a risky enterprise at sea.

16. **affections**, feelings.

17. **hopes abroad**, to have the hopes concentrated on the ships; **still**, continually.

18. **Plucking the grass**, pulling out a blade of grass and letting it out, to know the direction of the wind.

19. **Peering**, a combination of pry and peer; **in**, into; **roads**, open harbours; places of anchorage. (e.g. Visakhaptnam has a harbour, but at Kakinada there is only an open harbour; ships drop their anchor near Hope Island. The latter may be called a 'roadstead' or 'road'.)

17-19. These lines owe something to Marlowe's lines in *Jew of Malta* :



But now how stands the winds ?  
 Ha ! to the east ? Yes : see how stand the vanes ?  
 East and by south : when then I hope my ships  
 I sent for Egypt and the bordering isles  
 Are gotten up by Nilus' winding banks :

'*Rowls*' in line 19 also is suggested by Marlowe's lines,

Thine argosy from Alexandria,  
 .....doth ride in Malta Road.

21. **out of doubt**, without doubt

25. **hour-glass**, an instrument in which fine sand drops from glass vessel into another and thus reckon the hours.

26. **But**, a negative relative pronoun after a negative ; there is not a minute in which I do not think...etc, **shallows**, places where the waters are not deep ; **flats**, shoals, level tracts of sand covered by shallow waters.

27. **wealthy**, richly laden ; carrying valuable merchandise ; **Andrew**, The name of his ship. (The name might have been borrowed from one of the Spanish ships caught by the British in 1596 ; **dock'd**, embedded.

28. **Vailing**, to strike sail in token of submission ; **ribs**, the frame work of a ship ; the body of the ship.

29. **To kiss her burial**, to kiss the sand in which the ship is buried. The mast of the ship is broken and rests on the sand.

36-38. **Shall I...sad**, If I can picture to myself the wreck of the ship, scattering all its spices and silks on the sea, shall I not also picture the ruin that follows it ? If such a thing happens, then it makes me sad.

38. **bechanced**, happened.

40. **to think**, in thinking.

42. **bottom**, ship.

50. **Janus**, a Roman deity with two faces one averse from the other. The significance of the oath becomes evident in the following words which tell us of two types of persons. (One of the faces of the god was smiling and the other frowning.)

52. **peep through their eyes**, laugh so happily that the eyes become half-shut.

53. **laugh like parrots at a bag-piper**, The parrot was proverbially foolish; the bag-piper produces a melancholy tune. So, there {are foolish persons who laugh at even sad things, like parrots.

54. **other**, others; **vinegar aspect**, sour face.

56. **Nestor**, i. e., even Nestor. He was the oldest and wisest of the Greeks in the Trojan war. So he is a symbol of gravity.

61. **worthier friends**, better company.

64. **embrace the occasion**, take the opportunity.

66. **laugh**, to meet at a merry gathering.

67. **exceeding strange**, very unfriendly; **must it be so?** must you go.

74. **You...world**, You take life too seriously.

75. **They...care**, Those who are over-anxious about anything are sure to invite unhappiness.

77. **I hold the world but as the world**, I give to the world only as much thought as its transitory nature deserves.

Or, I give to the worldly affairs no greater thought than the world itself gives to them.

79. **sad**, 'grave' (furnace); 'melancholy' (Brown); 'grave, serious, but also meant to foreshadow the unfortunate 'part' which he 'plays', in the drama (*Verity*).

80. **With mirth...come**, (i) Let me go through life with mirth and laughter even unto a ripe old age when the face becomes wrinkled. (ii) Let mirth and laughter alone produce on my face wrinkles usually associated with old age. (*Prefer the first meaning.*)

82. **mortifying groans**, sighs that lead to an early grave.

84. **Sit...alabaster**, be cold and cheerless like the figure of a grandfather cut in alabaster. (In some editions the word 'alabaster' is spelt as 'alabaster' but the meaning is the same.)

85. **Sleep...wakes**, (i) sleeps when he should be awake. (ii) sleeps in spite of his attempts to keep himself awake.

85-6 **creep.....peevish**, jaundice is caused by depressing emotions. The process of being afflicted with 'jaundice' need not be so slow as 'creep'. A violent fit of emotion, like anger or sorrow, is said to cause jaundice.

88. **visages**, faces.

89. **cream and mantle**, to form a thick layer of scum.

90. **wilful stillness**, stubborn silence; **entertain**, keep up; maintain;

91. **to be dress'd in an opinion**, to earn the reputation.

92. **profound conceit**, deeply thoughtful.

93. **As who**, like one who; **Oracle**, a person with reputation for wisdom.

94. **let no dog bark**, let there be complete silence.

95-99. **I do know.....fools**, "I know some men who get the reputation of being wise only because they do not speak: if ever they open their lips, they will talk such nonsense, that their hearers, call them fools."

. Cf *Proverbs* XVII<sup>28</sup>: 'Even a fool, when he holdeth

his peace, is counted wise: he that shutteth his lips is esteemed a man of understanding'. (Cited by many editors)

98. **damn those ears**, He who calls another person a fool shall be in danger of hell fire. (*Matthew V* <sup>22</sup>)

101-2. **melancholy.. gudgeon**: melancholy is the bait and fool gudgeon is the fish. ('gudgeon' is a fish that is easily caught).

Do not try to acquire the cheap reputation of being wise by assuming gravity.

Melancholy should not be used as a bait to gain a reputation which is founded on foolish credulity." (*Brown*).

104. **exhortation**, a moral or religious discourse; **after dinner**, Such homilies are fit for post-prandial (after dinner) speeches.

108. **moe**, more. In both Middle English and Elizabethan English 'moe' referred to number, and more to magnitude (ie greater). But 'more' is used for both purposes.

110. **for this gear**, for the occasion.

112. **a neat's tongue dried**, a dried ox-tongue. An ox tongue is a delicacy, but it is moist. So it is dried with a heavy layer of spices; **a maid not vendible**, old maid; unsaleable in the marriage market. (a dehydrated feminine specimen of humanity).

113. **Is that anything now?**, Is there any sense in Gratiano's remarks? (Some editors put it as "It is that anything now." and some use 'new' for 'now'. It is better to read 'Is that anything now?')

117. **shall**, must.

119. **is the same**, is she.

120. **pilgrimage**, Belmont is a holy place and Portia is the goddess. (Belmont is kept free from the foul atmosphere of usury, vengeance, desertion, elopement etc of

Venice. It is a land of love, music, romance, and moonshine *cf* II vii l 40: "to kiss this shrine, this mortal breathing saint".)

124 **By something**, to some extent; **swelling port**, splendid style of living.

125. **faint means**, poor income or property; **grant continuance**, property which permits me to live in splendid style for a long time.

126. **make moan**, weep; feel sorry.

126-7 **to be abridg'd...rate**, to be compelled to give up that splendid style of living.

128 **to come fairly off**, to come off honourable; to be fully free from.

129. **my time**, in the green years of youth; **prodigal**, extravagant.

130. **gaged**, pledged.

132. **I have a warranty**, I have a right.

136. **still**, in spite of your extravagance, you always have been honourable. Your anxiety to be free from debts is commendable and is a trait of your honour.

137. **within the eye of honour**, If the proposal is honourable, as honourable as you always have been.

139. **occasions**, needs.

141. **his fellow**, its fellow arrow; **self-same flights** of the same weight, length, and sharpness and swiftness.

142. **advised**, careful.

143. **forth**, out.

144. **childhood proof**, childhood experiment; experience of childhood.

145 **pure innocence**, mere foolishness (some how this meaning does not appear to be apt); "freedom from moral fault" (*Johnson*).

146. **like a wilful youth**, self-willed youth. The

phrase is put within commas (Verity) and in brackets (Brown); the punctuation is no great consequence, if you remember that it is parenthetical. Bassanio begins a sentence, but does not complete it, for he finds it embarrassing to ask for more money from one to whom he already owes much, and also to tell him that what he has already lent is all gone, and that he cannot hope to get back the money.

148. **self**, same

150. **or**, either.

151. **hazard**, that which is risked.

154. **To wind about**, to speak in a round about manner; **circumstance**, circumlocution.

156. **In making question of**, in doubting.

160. **prest**, willing; ready to do.

162. **fairer than that word**, (i) "what is better still" (ii) fairer than what is generally conveyed by the word 'fair'.

163. **sometimes**, formerly.

165. **undervalued**, less than, inferior to.

166. **Portia**, daughter of Cato wife of Brutus, reputed for beauty and strength of character.

168. **four winds**, from all directions.

169. **sunny locks**, golden coloured hair.

170-172. **a golden fleece...in quest of her**, The allusion is to the expedition of the Argonauts under Jason to Colchis, to obtain the golden fleece of the ram which Hermes presented to Phrixus. Phrixus sacrificed the ram and presented the fleece to his father-in-law who had it hung up on a tree guarded by a dragon. Jason obtained it with the help of Medea.

171. **strond or strand**, The margin of a sea; a landing place.

175. **presages**, foretells; indicates the future; **thrift**, success.

176. **questionless**, doubtless. (Bassanio was perhaps ignorant of the caskets.)

178. **commodity**, stock on which to raise the amount.

179. **a present sum**, ready money.

181. **racked**, strained.

182. **to furnish thee**, to equip you suitably.

183. **presently**, at once.

185. **my trust**, on his surety or business credit; **for my sake**, on personal trust from those who have any regard for him.

## SCENE II

1. **awearry**, tired. In the first scene Antonio knows not why he is sad. The opening sentence of Portia also strikes the same key. Neither he nor she has any plausible reason why they should be 'sad' or 'awearry', but the terms serve the dramatic purpose. In the one case, however, the sadness deepens, and in the weariness yields place to gaiety.

5-6. **as sick...nothing**, excess of food (or even joy) can make a person as sick as the lack of it; **to be seated in the mean**, to occupy a middle position, having neither abundance nor absence (of wealth, comfort etc.) **no mean happiness**, adequate 'happiness';

7. **superfluity**, abstract for the concrete; a person having superfluous wealth. Riches bring with them enough anxiety to make one prematurely old.

8. **white hairs**, stand for 'age'; **competency**, enough to live on with moderate comfort.

9. **sentences**, maxims; judgment; **pronounced**, spoken; delivered.

In these two words there is a suggestion that the judgment (on superfluity of wealth) is delivered well. That Portia intended them to have a legal tone is evident from the legal terms in the following speech.

13. **divine**, a preacher; a minister of the gospel.

16. **for the blood**, to keep passions under control.

17. **hot temper**, hot blood, associated with youth, strong passions, and reckless haste; **cold decree**, a deeply thought out (moral) law.

18. **meshes**, net.

19. **criple**, a lame person. Good counsel is like a cripple because it is slow in movements. It does not reach people easily. The hare is a proverbial symbol of levity. (In winter hares were hunted on foot with nets); **reasoning**, this philosophic talk; **not in the fashion**, is not the way to choose a husband for myself.

22. **will** (1) desire; pleasure; choice; **will** (2), (i) desire (ii) testament, the written will (pun).

28. **who**, whom.

33. **over-name**, recall them all from the beginning to the end.

35. **level**, guess.

37. **colt**, (i) rough and impetuous young man. (The Neapolitan princes were expert horsemen).

38. **appropriation**, an addition to accomplishments.

39. **shoe him**, shoe the horse.

41. **as.....say**, as much as to say.

43. **weeping philosopher**, One like Heraclitus, the Grecian philosopher, who withdrew from life completely. As opposed to him Democritus was known as the Laughing philosopher.



45-46. **death's head...mouth**, a mute who is rendered incapable of producing any kind of noises for he has a bone in the mouth.

48. **by**, about.

51. **he hath...Neapolitan**, he talks more about his horse than the Neapolitan does of his; **better**, worse; more exaggerated

52-53. **he...in no man**, he lacks individuality. Every act of his is an imitation of another, only a little or greatly exaggerated; **throstle**, thrush, a singing bird.

54-55. **If I...husbands**, for he is every man in no man.

57. **requite**, to give the like in return.

61-62. **he hath...Italian**, Indirectly we learn that Portia knew those languages.

63-64. **a proper man's picture**, an excellent picture of a handsome young man but it is only mere appearance.

64-65. **dumb-show**, a play in which no words were spoken. Such a device was used to introduce the theme of a play or it was a play, for a short duration, in its own right.

65. **oddly suited**, (i) dressed in a strange manner; (ii) ill-suited to me.

65-67. **he bought...everywhere**, It was the Englishmen of those days 'to imitate four or five sundry nations.' (References could be found in Nashe's *'Unfortunate Traveller'* and Greene's *'Farewell to Follie'* **doublet**, jacket; **hose**, Knee-breeches; **bonnet**, hat (The correct meaning is 'a covering for the head').

70. **borrowed of**, received from.

71-72. **Frenchman...another**, "Alluding to the constant assistance, or rather constant promises of assistance that the French gave to the Scots in their quarrels with

the English."

**sealed under for another**, signed as a pledge that the Scottish lord would repay the Englishman's box, when he could.

79. **fall**, happen. (The plural verb is proper in the subjunctive).

80. **fell**, happened.

81. **make shift**, manage.

85. **Rhenish wine**, Wine that came from the area of the river Rhine, for the Germans would like it.

**contrary**, wrong. (Nerissa, of course, does not know the secret of the caskets; Portia speaks only in jest. In the original story, *Il Pecorone* the waiting-maid knew the secret of her mistress - the drugged wine which rendered the 'prospective lover ineffective - and revealed it to Giannetto, Bassanio's counterpart. Lest one should be under the impression that Nerissa knew the secret because of the hint in the original, let one remember that she does not.)

88. **sponge**, a heavy drunkard; one who sucks wine like a sponge.

92. **by some other sort**, in some other way.

93. **imposition**, rule; command.

96. **Sibylla**, Many Sibyls are known to mythology: the most renowned of them was the Sibyl of Cumae who obtained the boon of living for hundreds of years, as many years as the grains in the sands she was holding in her hands. The word is a common noun, and means a 'prophetess'.

96. **Diana**, The goddess of chastity.

104-105. **as I...called**, 'Yes; yes betrayed her eagerness a little, but she pretended that she was not quite sure of his name.

119. **condition**, disposition, nature.

120. **shrive**, obtain confession.

### SCENE III.

(The first scene introduces Antonio ; the second Portia ; and this, the third important character in the play, Shylock.)

1. **ducat**, a gold coin worth about 4s 8d. (But the Elizabethan £ is nearly 20 or 25 times more valuable than the present one).

7. **stead**, assist ; help ; The quick succession of questions reveal Bassanio's anxiety.

13. **imputation**, reproach.

16. **sufficient**, i. e. as a surety ; **supposition**, assumed to exist ; yet to be realised.

18. **Rialto**, the exchange of Venice where merchants met for the transaction of business.

20. **squandered**, scattered ; but the word carries with it the suggestion that Antonio was imprudent in risking all his ships at once.

30. **pork**, pig's flesh. (The Jews and the Muslims do not eat pork).

31. **Your prophet the Nazarite**, Jesus. **conjured the devil into**, ref. St. Mathew VIII <sup>28-32</sup>.

37. **fawning publican**, The term 'publican' means a Roman tax-collector. Such officers learnt the habit of being humble before their Roman masters. Antonio has the aspect of such a publican because by nature he was a little sad and just then there was a feeling of humiliation in approaching a Jew, whom he hated, for money.

Or he was like the Publican of the parable of the

Pharsee and the Publican in the Bible *Luke XVIII* <sup>10-14</sup>.

It is appropriate that Shylock should consider Antonio a publican for such officers harrassed the Jews in many ways.

39. **for that**, 'That' may be omitted, or, it may be understood, 'for the reason that'; **low simplicity**, humble foolishness.

40. **gratis**, for nothing; **usance**, a dignified name for 'usury' interest on money.

42. **upon the hip**, at a disadvantage. (A term from wrestling).

45. **there where**, i. e., on the Rialto,

46. **thrift**, gain.

47. **tribe**, race.

48-51. That is a trick common to all money-lenders. They pretend that they have no ready money and, will be obliged to borrow from some one else.

52. **gross**, the full amount.

56. **Rest you fair**, is a form of greeting or salutation.

60. **ripe**, pressing; wants that can brook no delay.

61. **possess'd**, informed.

68. **upon advantage**, at interest.

69. **I do never use it**, it is not my custom.

73. **The third**, the third in the line of succession, not from, but *beginning with* Abraham.

77. **compromised**, made an agreement.

78. **eanlings**, new born lambs; **streak'd and pied**, having stripes, and parti-coloured (of more than one colour)

81. **ewes**, female sheep; **peel'd me certain wands**, stripped or peeled some sticks and put them before the ewes, at the time of conjugation. (The point is that, according to the agreement Jacob was to get parti-coloured

lambs only, but he knew the art of making the ewes produce such lambs only.)

85. **steal not**, 'interest' is considered a form of theft. Shylock means that Jacob contrived to get excess, but it could not be called 'interest'.

86. **served for**, worked as a servant, and his income was the reward of labour, and cannot be called 'interest'.

87-88. **A thing...heaven**, parti coloured lambs were not the result of any trick played by Jacob, for such things ever determined by heaven.

(The purpose of the allusion may be stated thus:

From Shylock's point of view—Jacob entered into an agreement with Laban to look after the sheep and as a reward get all the parti-coloured lambs. But Jacob knew the trick of making the ewes deliver such lambs only. He had the skill to make his labour pay more than what was due unto him.

From Antonio's point of view—Parti-coloured lambs could not be result of any trick of Jacob. Plain-coloured or parti-coloured, such things were determined by fate. Jacob's reward was the result of his labour. So it could not be called usury.)

89. **inserted**, (i) introduced in the conversation to justify interest. (ii) inserted in the Scripture to sanctify interest.

90. **Is...rams?**, Is your money, likes ewes and rams, to beget more money?

98. **falsehood**, not merely 'lie' but 'deceit'.

101. **beholding**, obliged; indebted to.

103. **rated**, reprovèd.

106. **sufferance**, endurance,

108. **spit**, spat; **gaberdine**, loose upper garment.

109. **use**, my profession; my interests.

113. **void your rheum**, spat on me.

114. **foot me**, kick me; stranger cur, strange dog.

119. **in a bondman's key**, in a slave's tone.

130. **a breed for barren metal**, interest.

132. **break**, break the conditions; fail to pay it on the appointed day.

136. **stained**, disgraced; marred my reputation.

137. **no doit**, a trifling sum (*doit* a small Dutch coin equal to about a forthing).

139. **kind**, benevolent, generous.

142. **notary**, an officer authorised to certify deeds (somewhat equivalent to the Sub-Registrar).

143. **single bond**, a bond with just your signature without the need for witnesses Shylock wants to create the impression that the bond is a mere formality.

147. **nominated for**, named as; **equal pound**, exact; it is irony that the Jew himself should ask for 'an *exact* pound.'

153. **dwelt**, remain.

168. **for**, because of. Shylock expects Antonio to cease reviling him because of this kindness.

173. **fearful guard**, timid or untrustworthy guard.

174. **unthrifty knave**, a useless fellow.

178. **terms**, (i) conditions (ii) Language or words.

179. **dismay**, cause for fear.

## ACT II. SCENE I.

(By the end of the first Act, the Bond-story is a-foot. It is certain that Antonio will sign the bond, obtain the money, and comply with Bassanio's request. Now begins the casket-story.)

**Flourish**, loud sound of trumpets.

1. **mislike**, dislike.

2. **shadowed livery**, the dark dress ; the dark brown or black skin ; **burnish'd sun**, glowing.

3. **To...bred**, my country is in the hot zone.

4. **fairest**, very white in complexion.

5. **Phoebus' fire**, the hot rays of the sun ; **thaws**, melts ; **icicles**, frozen pieces of dropping water.

6. **incision for your love**, to stab the arm, to prove the strength of love.

7. **reddest**, 'red' blood stands for courage. The Prince means that he will any day prove a better gallant and warrior than any one born in the cold north.

9. **feared**, terrified.

10. **best-regarded**, regarded the best ; the most talked of ; **clime**, country ; region ;

12. **except to steal**, unless it is to win your love.

13. **In terms of choise**, in the matter of choosing.

14. **nice**, too particular ; **direction**, guidance.

17. **scanted**, restrained me.

18. **hedged me by his wit**, restricted me with his wisdom.

19. **His wife who**, the wife of him who.

20-21. **as fair as any comer**, (i) as a good chance of winning as any one else. (ii) Though you are black, to me you are as fair as any one else, if you make the right choice. (*Indirect meaning*).

25. **scimitar**, a short, single-edged curved sword.

26. **Sophy**, Shah of Persia ;

27. **That won three fields**, Solyman conquered nearly the whole of Persia, but the Persian Prince had the honour of winning three battles (though the war was lost), a remarkable feat before so huge an army. But this

Morocco was able to slay such a remarkable prince. **Sultan Solyman**, Solyman the Magnificent, Sultan of Turkey.

28. **outstare**, overstate.

32. **but alas the while!**, alas for the times !

33-35. **If Hercules...hand**, Lichas was the servant who brought Hercules the poisoned shirt of Nessus. The shirt burnt itself into the skin of Hercules. In his anguish and wrath, he threw Lichas into the sea. It was a matter of superior strength, and Hercules was bound to win; and Lichas was such a weakling that the hero could easily throw him into the sea, like a ball. But if such a strong man and weak man were to play a game of dice, there was every possibility for Lichas to win.

Morocco means that if bodily prowess were of any use, he would surely win her. Since it was mere lottery, a much weaker and, therefore, an unworthy man, like Lichas, might win her.

36. **Alcides**, Hercules; **by his page**, by his servant.

44. **advised**, careful.

46. **to the temple**, i. e. to the private chapel, where the oath is to be taken.

49. **blest**, blessedest.

## SCENE II

1. **will serve**, will have to allow; just at present his conscience asks him not to run away, but it will be obliged to allow him, when he shows it good reasons why he should run away.

2. **fiend**, devill.

8. **scorn running with thy heels**, to strike the



ground with the heel is to show contempt. So here 'running with the heels' is to scorn the service of the Jew. But the conscience asks him to scorn the thought of scorning the present job.

9. **pack**, begone; **via**!, Away, forward!

10. **heavens**, the wit lies in making the fiend use 'heavens'.

11-12. **hanging...my heart**, like a timid mistress, who hangs by the neck of man, to prevent him from doing a brave deed. The 'heart' indicates inclination or desire, but 'conscience' weighs heavily on it and prevents him from acting according to his inclinations.

12-13. **Honest** (1), (2), (3) faithful; **honest** (3) chaste.

14. **something**, a little; **smack**, to have flavour.

15. **grow to**, to have an unpleasant flavour; **a kind of taste**, the implication is that his father had a weakness for other women, in which he fails to be 'honest' i. e. faithful or chaste. (Besides, one cannot be as sure of one's father, as one of the mother, but the clown is sure of the chastity of his mother. So if there is a streak of unfaithfulness in him, it must have come from his father.)

17. **Budge**, move.

20. **God...mark**, this phrase was originally used to avert an evil omen; later the phrase was used before an unholy or indecent remark.

22. **saving your reverence**, under your pardon; he asks the pardon of the audience for mentioning the devil.

23. **incarnal**, incarnate (a mal a-propos)

31. **sand-blind**, quite blind; (When he is quite blind, he cannot be more blind, but Lobbo's wit makes him 'gravel-blind', for gravel has heavier particles.)

32. **try confusions**, try conclusions: make an experi-

ment with.

40. **By Gods sonties**, By God's saints.

44. **raise the waters**, create a storm.

48. **well to live**, living and well—so well that he will live for a long period.

49. **a**, he.

50. **Launcelot**, i-e plain Launcelot, and not Master Launcelot.

52. **ergo**, Lut. therefore.

56. **father**, a form of address to old people.

57. **Sisters three**, the Fates, Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos. Verity writes: Their work is summed in the line. *Clotho colum retinet, Lachesis net, et Atropos occat* i. e , Clotho holds the spindle. Lachesis weaves man's fate upon it, and Atropos cuts the web (and thus brings man's life to an end.)

62. **cudgel**, a heavy stick; **hovel-post**, a stick that supports a tiny cottage.

86. **what a beard**, A stage direction in the old editions make the old man touch the back of his son's head.

87. **fill horse**, a horse that draws planks or dead wood boards.

90. **backward**, - i. e shorter.

95. **set up my rest**, determined to; (a phrase from a game of cards: "a stake that was reserved for the last bid". When that too lost, the game was over.) So it means" finally decided to.

97. **a very Jew**, has all the bad qualities associated with a true Jew.

99. **every finger with my ribs**, every rib with my finger.

100. **give me**, give for me.

102. **as far...ground**, as far as land will permit me

104. **Jew**, - (i) acquire all the undesirable qualities of a Jew; **Jew** (ii) Shylock.

111. **Gramercy**, Contraction of *grand merci*, in return to the salutation.

115. **infection**, affection ; inclination.

119. **saving ... reverence**, begging your pardon.

120. **cater-cousins**, friends (friends who meet at the dinner table); they (i. e. Launcelot and Jew do not agree together)

123. **frutify**, notify.

124. **a dish of doves**, doves are a common form of present in Italy.

126. **impertinent**, pertinent, one that concerns me.

128. **though I say it**, though I should not say it, I say it on behalf of my father.

129. **one...both**, both of you have the same suit.

131. **defect**, effect ; the sum of it.

134. **preferred thee**, recommended you.

137. **The old ... parted**, 'The grace of God is better than wealth.' It is parted because Bassanio has the grace, and Shylock the wealth.

143. **guarded**, braided.

145-48. **If any man ..trifle of wives**, Launcelot studies the lines on his hands and says," if any man in Italy taking an oath can show a palm with more favourable lines on it than mine, *I am vastly surprised* (Verity). He means that there is good luck in store for him.

146. **fairer table**, better palm; **which**, the tabe. i. e, the palm (During Elizabethan times the table line or the line of fortune was what in modern palmistry (or, technically chiromancy) is called the Heart line i. e., the line which runs across the hand from the forefinger to the edge of the below the little finger.)

147. **line of life**, is the circular line that surrounds the mount of Venus.

149. **simple coming in**, a poor allowance.

150. **drowning** going bankrupt.

151. **with the edge of a feather bed**, the danger of matrimony.

153. **for this gear**, for once; for this purpose.

154. **twinkling**, within a fraction of a second.

156. **bestowed**, put (on board the ship that will take him to Belmont).

170. **Parts that become thee**, qualities that suit you

172. **they**, the parts.

173. **Something too liberal**, appear somewhat unrestrained.

174. **allay**, moderate; quality.

176. **misconstrued**, misunderstood.

179. **sober habit**, calm manner.

181. **demurely**, gravely.

182-183. **hood...hat**, during Shakespear's times hats were worn during dinner.

182. **grace**, prayer before dinner.

184. **civility**, good manners, politeness.

185. **sad ostent**, grave appearance.

188. **guage**, measure.

### SCENE III

(This scene introduces the Lorenzo-Jessica story and reveals the avaricious side of Shylock's nature.)

3. **some taste**, a little of it.

5. **soon**, early i. e. try to meet Lorenzo ere dinner commences.

10. **exhibit**, (1) My tears are expressive of what my tongue should say, for sorrow prevents the use of it  
(ii) It may be Launcelotism for 'inhibit' or prohibit.

18. **strife**, between duty to father and love for her man.

## SCENE IV

(This explains the plans to make things easy for Jessica).

Lorenzo's plan is that some of them steal away from the banquet, and return with disguises on to surprise both the guests and the host. It was an early Tudor custom to have such a masque after supper.

1. **in**, during.

2. **Disguise us**, put on the vizards for the masque.

5. **spoke us**, spoken among ourselves who and who will be torch-bearers; **torch bearers**, each person in disguise was to have a torch-bearer, an important feature of an Italian masquerade.

6. **quaintly**, prettily; **quaintly ordered**, arranged prettily.

7. **not undertook**, not undertaken; I think that it is better not to undertake.

9. **Friend Launcelot**, it is evident that the clown has been carrying letters between the lovers; this is not the first of such letters.

10. **break up**, open; break open, for it was a Elizabethan custom to seal letters.

16. **By your leave**, please excuse me.

22. **masque**, in Elizabethan times a masque was only a masquerade or torch-light procession, not the 'masque' of the later day such as that of Ben Jonson or Milton.

35 7. **And never ... Jew**, May misfortune never dare to cross her path unless she (i. e., misfortune) does it under the plea that she is the daughter of an unbelieving jew.

35. **her foot**, her path.

37. **issue to**, child of; **faithless**, unbelieving (i. e in Christ.)

#### SCENE V

3. **What, Jessica**, Shylock calls for her. **gorman-dize**, eat plentifully; but Launcelot earlier complained that he had been 'famished'.

17. **a-brewing**, in the making; **rest**, peace of mind.

18. **to-night**, last night.

22. **conspired**, i. e. to get up.

24. **Black-monday**, Easter Monday.

25-26. **at six o'clock ... afternoon**, sheer nonsense; A Monday falling on Wednesday is enough nonsense; but six of the Monday morning has fallen at 4 O'clock in the evening, four years ago is utter nonsense. **Ash-wednesday**, the first Wednesday before easter.

29-30. **Drum ... fife**, maskers were accompanied by musicians.

29. **wry-necked fife**, refers to the man who plays the fife (a small flute), and not the instrument; he is called wry-necked because his neck is bent, while he played the instrument.

30. **casements**, windows

32. **varnished**, painted; but here it means wearing masks which are painted.

34. **foppery**, foolishness.

35. **Jacob's staff**, Ordinarily it means 'a pilgrim's staff'. It appears that it is a symbol of 'from rags to riches', for Jacob said, "With my staff came I over this Jordon and now I have gotten two bands".

43. **Hagar's offspring**, Hagar was a Gentile and bondswoman of Abraham by whom she had a son who was an outcast.

45. **patch**, clown.

46. **profit**, useful work.

## SCENE VI.

1. **penthouse**, a projection of a house with a sloping roof; a shed. Earlier the maskers desired to meet at Gratiano's house (Scene 4, l 26). Apparently there was a slight change.

6. **pigeons**, Just as in our mythology, the parrot is the favourite of Manmadha, the rat of Vinayaka, Garuda of Vishnu, so also in the Roman mythology, the doves are the favourite of Venus, the goddess of Love. They draw the chariot of the goddess.

8. **obliged faith**, faith bound by promises or contract.

9. **That ever holds**, What you have just now said about 'obliged faith' is always and universsally true.

10. **untread**, go back; retrace.

11. **measures**, feat such as horses are trained to perform.

13. **more spirit chased than enjoy'd**, Most people gladly run after pleasures, but they do not seem to have the patience to enjoy them.

14. **younger or younker**, younger son; a smart and gay young man.

15. **scarfed bark**, a boat gaily decorated with many coloured flags.

16. **strumpet wind**, wind is a strumpet because it makes no difference between one thing and another. It hugs a boat with dirty sails as readily as it does one with gay sails. (A younker too is as ready to embrace any person.)

18. **over-weathered ... sails**, The prodigal of the parable returns a wreck, after having had a gay time. The gay ship also returns, but all her gay decorations are now torn to shreds, and she is now 'lean, rent and beggared'; **over-weathered**, damaged by exposure to the weather.

32. **Heaven.....thou art**, Heaven and your inmost thoughts know that you are mine own.

35. **exchange**, now she is in boy's clothes.

41. **(to) hold a candle to**, i. e. to stand by and see something happening. While something (important) is happening to her own self, she must only remain passive and do nothing. Here, it may mean to expose my own folly.

42. **They**, the shames; **light**, wanton.

43. **an office of discovery**, It is a duty (the holding up of the torch) which reveals me.

44. **obscured**, hidden.

45. **so are you**, she is hidden just then, for she is in disguise.

46. **garnish**, garb, dress.

47. **close**, secretive; **play the runaway**, the time is running fast.

47. **stayed**, awaited

49 **gild**, to furnish ... with

51. **by my hood**, for just now his mask has a hood; the habit of swearing by the hood comes from the friars;



**a gentle, and no jew**, gentle with a play on the word, for it sounds like 'gentle' too (pronounced as 'jentil' also). 'Gentile' means a heathen (here) a Jew; 'gentle' means nobly born.

52. **Beshrew me**, may evil befall me.

64. **come about**, veered round and became favourable.

## SCENE VII

1. **discover**, show; reveal.

4. **who**, which.

8. **dull lead ... blunt**, 'dull' because it has no lustre and because it cannot be made sharp. 'blunt'-plain-spoken; mean or base (like itself).

12. **withal**, with it

20. **to shows of dross**, 'for tokens (or promise) of rubbish.

22. **virgin hue**, cold, haste, white appearance.

25. **even**, impartial.

26. **rated by thy estimation**, taken at thine own valuation.

27. **enough**, a good deal.

30. **disabling of**, lowering.

40. **shrine**, image (The whole for the part-Synecdoche) **breathing**, living; **saint**, Mediaeval chivalry-the lover's worship of his lady was like the worship of a saint.

41. **Hyrceanian deserts**, an area south of the Caspian sea, a province of the ancient Persian Empire, famous as a breeding place of Tigers. The present Caspian sea was called Hyrcanian Sea in ancient days. The area is called a desert because of its wildness; **vasty**, boundless; very **vast**.

42. **through fares**, thoroughfares.

44. **the watery kingdom**, the ocean.

47. **As o'er a brook**, as if the ocean were no more than a mere stream to cross.

51. **to rib**, to enclose. Lead was formerly used in coffins; **cerecloth**, winding-sheet, a sheet of cloth that covers the dead body.

52. **immured**, imprisoned, enclosed.

53. **ten times**, it appears that the ratio between the prices of silver and gold was a fact in 1600.

56. **coin**, the name of the coin was 'angel', current in Shakespeare's time. ( $\frac{1}{2}$  a sovereign); **an angel**, the coin had the figure of the archangel Michael treading on the dragon.

57. **insculp'd** engraved in relief.

58. **an angel**, i. e. Portia's picture.

63. **A carrion Death**, a death's head, empty skull.

65. **glisters**, glitters, sparkles.

67. **my outside**, i. e. gold

(It remotely suggests the flesh and skin that once covered the skull. Physical beauty is only skin deep, and for such a thing 'Many a man his life hath sold.')

69. **gilded tomb**, perhaps a decorated tomb or a marble tomb.

72. **your answer**, the answer you just now received.

73. **cold**, dead.

76. **heat**, the heat or ardour of love; **frost**, the unhappiness of love's labour's lost.

77. **tedious leave**, farewell that is tiresomely long; **part**, depart.

79. **complexion**, (i) the colour of the skin which, in the case of Morocco, is dark (ii) temperament, which in the present case, is a bit too hasty.

## SCENE VIII

4-5. **outcries...ship**, the Duke appears to be an upright man who is anxious to preserve the sanctity of the laws of his country. He is keen on protecting the rights of aliens, like the Jews; **raised**, roused (made him wake up from sleep).

9. **amorous**, loving

19. **double ducats**, coins double the value of ducats.

20. **two stones**, one a diamond which Shylock purchased at Frankfort, and the other a turquoise, he obtained as a present from his wife. (vide Act III i).

24. **keep his day**, pay the Shylock before the terms of the bond expire.

25. **pay for this**, suffer greatly on account of this grief of Jew, for the loss of his daughter and ducats will make him still more cruel.

29. **miscarried**, was lost.

30. **fraught**, laden.

39. **slubber**, spoil by haste.

40. **stay...time**, wait until the time is ripe for the success of your business.

42-45. Antonio does not know about the lottery of the caskets. **ostents**, shows; expressions.

45. **conveniently become**, properly or suitably worth.

46. **there**, then.

48. **sensible**, sensitive.

52. **quicken**, enliven; **enbraced heaviness**, sorrow that is readily conceived; sorrow that comes readily by conceiving the wrong side of things.

## SCENE IX

1. **straight**, immediately

2. **Arragon**, is the only Spanish character in the plays of Shakespeare. The discomfiture of a Spaniard would please the Elizabethan audience greatly.

3. **election**, choice; **presently**, shortly.

19. **And so...me**, I too am ready to observe the injunctions. **fortune**, good luck.

20. **base**, what was only 'dull' for Morocco, becomes 'base' to Arragon.

26. **By**, for.

27. **fond**, foolish.

28-29. **but, like the martlet, Builds**, i. e. is like martlet which builds (Verity). It builds its nest in places which look fair, but are in fact dangerous.

29. **weather**, in an exposed situation.

30. **force**, power; **road of casualty**, path of mischance or accidents.

32. **jump**, agree.

33. **rank me with**, make myself equal to.

37-38. **who shall ... Fortune**, "seek to cheat".

39. **Without the stamp of merit**, without a proper claim based on merit. (Arragon would not attempt to cheat Fortune without a proper claim based on merit.)

41. **estates**, **degrees**, properties, social ranks; **offices**, high official positions.

42. **derived**, got, inherited.

43. **purchased**, acquired.

44. **cover.....stand bare**, be masters, who are now servants; **cover**, cover the head (with a hat); **bare**, without head-dress; one must remain without a cover for the head before superiors.

46. **gleaned**, picked.

47. **seed**, offspring.

46-48. **How much ..times**, "how much meanness would be found among the great, and how much greatness among the mean." **ruin of the times**, ruined by circumstances, by unfavourable times.

49. **new-varnished**, regain the outward appearance of the nobly born.

51. **assume desert**, invest myself with merit. Verity contends that such a meaning is wrong, because Arragon is sure he does possess merit. So, 'take that which I deserve.'

55. **a schedule**, a slip or scroll with writing.

59. **a fool's head**, what an irony! We that refused to be of the fool multitude, now got a fool's head!

61-62. **To offend...natures**, When he failed, he ought to go 'without more speech' (line 7) But how he passes comments. One cannot be both the offender and the judge, for the functions of each are opposed.

67. **shadows kiss**, kiss unsubstantial things. "Cherish vain delusions" (Verity).

68. **Iwis**, surely; **I wis**, I know.

69. **silvered over**, having silver hair and hence appearing wise.

72. **sped**, done with.

78. **worth**, misfortune

80. **deliberate fools**, fools lost in deliberation or thought; but the right choice does not depend on the power of reasoning, but on the power of love.

85. **my lord**, Portia is funny. A sportive reply to 'my lady'.

89. **sensible regreets**, tangible greeting; not merely words but also gifts,

90. **To wit**, namely; **commends**, commendations; **breath**, speech

92. **likely**, promising; good-looking.

93. **A day in April**, a day in spring, the forerunner of summer.

94. **costly**, rich, lavish; **at hand**, near.

95. **fore-spurrer**, one who came before his lord, on the horse.

98. **high-day**, extravagant.

100. **poet**, messenger.

101. **Bassanio...be!** "may it be, O love, Bassanio!  
(Verity.)

### ACT III. SCENE I.

2. **yet it lives there unchecked**, it is still talked of without contradiction.

3. **narrow sea**, between France and England.

4. **Goodwins**, the Goodwin sands, near the mouth of Thames, the scene of many a shipwreck.

5. **tall ship**, large, fine.

6. **gossip Report**, Rumour of Gossip.

8. **gossip**, a talkative person esp., woman.

9. **knapped**, nibbled with teeth; **knapped ginger**, it appeared that during those days old women were in the habit of nibbling ginger. He wishes that Dame Rumour be but an old woman whose talk has no substance in it.

11. **slips of prolixity**, words that flow out tediously or mistakes of a needlessly long talk.

18. **betimes**, in good time.

24. **the wings she flew withal**, the boy's dress in which Jassica made good her escape,

26. **fledge**, fledge i. e., fit to fly; **complexion**, nature; disposition.

29. **if the devil may be her judge**; i. e. Shylock.

30. **flesh and blood**, my own child.

31. **old carrion**, Solanio purposely understands 'flesh' and blood 'to mean one's passions and desires, and calls Shylock abusively as 'old carrion'. You old fellow, what she has done is hateful and is against thine own desires.

34. **jet and ivory**, dark black and pure white.

35. **red wine and Rhenish**, between red wine and Renish which is light yellow, between the red thick blood of Jessica, and the feeble thin blood of Shylock.

38. **match**, bargain.

39. **prodigal**, an extravagance which has led to exposing himself to ruin for a friend.

40. **smug**, trim and neat; **mart**, market-place; the market place is a battle field of wits and business acumen, and is no place for neat dress and complacent manner.

43. **cur'sy**, curtsy i. e., generosity (in the present context)

47. **hindered me**, prevented me from making.

52. **dimensions**, limbs; **affection**, **passions**, not easily distinguishable, but 'passions' may refer to 'emotions' and 'affections' to the desires prompted by them or 'affections' may refer to the recent affair of Jessica.

60. **humility**, forbearance.

70. **Genoa**, a city and sea-port of Italy.

74. **a diamond**, one of the two stones referred to in II 8.

75. **Frankfort**, a German city where a great fair was held twice a year and which had intimate trade relations with Venice; **the curse**, the curse of penury.

79. **hearsed**, coffined.

81. **thou**, J. R. Brown observes that 'then makes

better reading but in a speech full of grief, we need not be particular about coherence, 'there is not sufficient warrant to depart from the text'.

89. **Tripolis**, a city of North Africa, directly south of Italy.

101. **break**, fail to fulfil the conditions of the bond.

107. **turquoise**, the second stone referred to in II 8.

111. **officer**, Sheriff's officer whose duty it was to make arrests.

## SCENE II

6. **quality**, manner.

8. **but thought**, only thought; maidens are not free to give expression to their thoughts of love.

14. **Beshrew your eyes**, you have an 'evil eye'.

15. **O'erlook'd**, bewitched.

16. **the other half yours**, when one half of me is yours, the other half too belongs to you.

17. **Mine own I should say**, I should have said that the other half is mine, (instead of saying, 'yours')

17-18. **but if mine...all yours**, but it makes little difference for what is mine shall be yours; **naughty**, wicked.

19. **bars**, obstacles: her father's will which puts obstacles between her and her right to give herself and her property freely to some one she loves.

20-21. **though yours...not I**, Though I am yours in heart, I do not belong to you, if you make a wrong choice. If anything goes amiss, let Fortune, and not I, be blamed. **prove it so**, If it proves so; if it turns out that you make a wrong choice.



22. **peize**, to retard, make it go slower.  
23. **eke**, increase.  
26. **rack**, an instrument of fortune.  
28. **mistrust**, lack of confidence; doubt.  
29. **fear**, fear for.  
30. **amity and life**, close relationship.  
31. **treason and love**, there is as much amity between my treason and love as there is between snow and fire. They cannot exist together; **as**, as between.  
41. "Portia knows that the lottery is a true test of character." (Verity)  
49. **flourish**, i. e. of trumpets  
51-3. Refers to the old English custom of playing music under the windows of the bridegroom's bedroom on the morning of his marriage. (Verity)  
54 **presence**, dignity; **more love**, When Hercules (Alcides) rescued Hesoiné from the sea-monster, it was not for love that he did so. But this Hercules (Bassanio) makes that venture for love.  
55 60. Laomedon, king of Troy offended Poseidon, God of the sea. The latter sent a sea-monster to ravage the country. Advised by an oracle, a virgin was sent to the monster from time to time. By lottery, the king's daughter, Hesoiné, had to be sent once. Hercules promised to rescue her for a gift of rare horses. He rescued her, though he did not get the horses.  
56. **virgin tribute**, the periodical offer of virgins as food for the monster; **howling**, loudly weeping.  
57. **I stand for**, I represent.  
58. **the rest aloof**, the rest of her train stand for Dardanian wives; **Dardanian**, Trojan.  
59. **bleared visages**, weeping faces.  
61. **dismay**, fear.

63. **Fancy**, not true love; fleeting love.

73. **So**, connects the speech with **Fancy**, which stands for the effect of outward show.

74. **still**, always.

79. **approve**, confirm.

81. **but**, a negative relative meaning 'which does not'

84. **stairs of sands**, banks of sand.

85. **Mars**, God of war.

86. **search'd**, proved, examined; **livers white as milk**, when the blood becomes cold, the liver becomes pale, and a pale liver is a mark of cowardice.

87. **valour's excrement**, i. e. beard which a brave man alone deserves to wear; **excrement**, out growth; an excrescence.

88. **redoubted**, feared greatly; **them**, themselves.

89. **purchas'd by the weight**, aids to beauty are purchased in the market at a certain price per ounce.

91. **lightest**, very light of character.

92. **crisp'd**, curled; **snaky**, long and sinuous; **golden locks**, golden hair was the reigning fashion of Shakespeare's time.

93. **wanton gambols**, playful for sport.

94. **upon supposed fairness**, upon the head of a woman supposed to be beautiful.

95. **dowry**, gift.

97. **guiled**, guileful; treacherous;

98. **Indian beauty**, a dark-skinned woman.

102. **Hard food Midas**, Greedy of gold, Midas, king of Phrygia, prayed God that every thing he touched should turn to gold. His wish was granted and to his dismay his food turned to gold when he touched it.

104. **meagre**, poor.

113. **in measure**, moderately; **scant**, limit.

117. **counterfeit**, likeness; portrait.

127. **unfurnishd**, unprovided with the second eye.

130. **limp**, the original outstrips all descriptions and portrait, and they have to halt behind; **substance**, the original i. e. Portia.

131. **continent**, that which contains or sums up.

141. **by note**, by the direction of the scroll.

158. **livings**, properties,

160. **Is sum of something**, just something, not much; **to term in gross**, to describe as a whole, not in detail.

161. **unschool'd**, her modesty makes her speak thus; the trial scene belies such a quality.

162. **Happy**, fortunate.

175. **vantage**, opportunity: **exclaim on**, to protest against.

201. **intermission**, respite.

206. **roof**, of the mouth.

210. **Achiev'd**, won; gained.

218. **youth of my interest**, my newly acquired position.

219. **by your leave**, with your permission (addressed to Portia).

220. **very**, true.

222. **entirely**, sincerely.

239. **I would...he had lost**, "that *you* (not Shylock) were Antonio's creditors" (Verity) **shrewd**, bad, unpleasant ('Shrewd' is the past participle of 'shrewen'=to course).

243. **turn**, change.

244. **constant**, steady.

258. **engaged**, been under obligation to.

259. **mere**, absolute.

264. **hit**, success.

270. **present**, ready; **discharge**, pay off.

273. **keen**, cruel; **confound**, destroy,

275. **impeach**, challenge; **the freedom of the state**, the rights given by the state to alien.

277. **magnificoes**, the chief men or noble men of Venice.

278. **port**, dignity; status; **persuaded**, pleaded; argued.

279. **envious plea**, malicious demand.

280. **best-condition'd**, best natured. **deface**, Cancel.

309. **cheer**, countenance; disposition. **dear bought**, i. e. by Antonio's great sacrifice. Were it not for it, Bassanio would not have come to Belmont.

### SCENE III.

9. **naughty**, bad; **fond**, foolish.

10. **perhaps**, Antonio requested the gaoler to let him have a word with Shylock.

14. **dull-eyed**, easily deceived; stupid.

16. **intercessors**, those who plead for others; mediators.

19. **kept**, lived.

20. **bootless**, useless.

22. **his forfeitures**, penalties due to him.

25. **grant...hold**, allow this to hold good.

27. **commodity**, privilege; right;

38. **it**, either the course of law 'or' the commodity.

30-31. **Since...nations**, a further reason of practical wisdom for upholding the law. Venice has trade relations with many foreigners. If the state were to twist law to

the advantage of a citizen as against an alien the impartiality of justice would be called into question, and trade would suffer. The very prosperity of Venice depends on its commerce.

32. **bated**, reduced.

## SCENE IV

2. **conceit**, conception.

7 **lover**, good friend

9. **customary bounty**, ordinary acts of kindness.

12. **waste**, spend.

14. **a like proportion**, similarity; harmony.

16. **lineaments**, (here) characteristics.

20. **my soul**, i. e. Bassanio.

25. **husbandry and manage**, care and management of

33. **imposition**, charge; responsibility.

50. **cousin**, kinsman.

52. **imagined**, imaginable.

53. **tranect**, probably a misprint for 'traject'. If it is 'tranect', it means *a ferry*. If it is 'traject' it means the place where boats are lifted from River Brenta into the channels of Venice by means of a crane. Better to read 'tranect'.

56. **convenient**, suitable to the occasion.

60. **habit**, dress.

61. **accomplished**, equipped.

63. **accoutred**, dressed : equipped.

65. **braver**, prettier.

67. **reed**, broken; in the voice of a boy's voice which begins to change for the man's.

69. **quaint**, strange.

72. **I could not do withal**, I could not help it.  
 74. **puny**, petty; little.  
 75. **that**, so that.  
 77. **Jacks**, fellows.  
 84. **measure**, cover; **twenty miles**, The distance between Belmont and Padua.

## SCENE V.

3. **fear you**, fear for you.  
 20. **one by another**, together.  
 23. **rasher**, a piece bacon; pig's flesh salted and dried. ('Pork' is swine's flesh)  
 27. **get my wife into corners**, (i) secret places (ii) put in difficult situations.  
 39. **are out**, have quarrelled  
 34. **stomachs**, appetites; (He plays on 'prepare for' = ready to eat, and to do that hunger is the best preparation)  
 37. **cover**, (i) lay the table (ii) cover the head (for inferiors should not remain covered before their superiors)  
 38. **will you cover...?**, will you cover your head? (for Launcelot is only a servant)  
 39. **I know my duty**, He again purposely plays on the word, and says that it is not his duty to cover the table.  
 40. **yet more quarrelling with occasion**, disputing at every opportunity.  
 45-46. **For the table...covered**, (i) inversion of words. The words 'table' and 'neat' must be interchanged. (ii) **table**, food (then the words are in proper order)  
 47. **humours and conceits**, inclinations and personal opinions.

48. **O dear discretion**, This is an apostrophe. Launcelot has an discrimination of words. (But he misapplies them.) **suit**ed, (i) ill-suited (ii) made suitable

51. **A many**, many; **stand in better place**, have a better employment.

52. **Garnish'd like him**, "furnished with a supply of words." (Verity); **tricksy**, artful.

53. **defy the matter**, pay me respect to matter. Just for the sake of using a word according to one's fancy, one disregards the subject of talk. **How cheer'st thou**, (of) what cheer (are you?)

60. **do not mean it**, does not live an upright life.

66. **Pawn'd**, staked.

67. **fellow**, equal.

70. **stomach**, (i) appetite (ii) inclination.

72. **howsoe'er**, in whatever manner.

73. **set you forth**, praise you.

#### ACT IV. SCENE I.

7. **to qualify**, to temper; to moderate.

13. **The very tyranny**, the full cruelty.

18. **thou but lead'st this fashion**, "You are merely keeping up this appearance." (Verity).

20. **remorse**, pity.

21. **apparent**, seeming.

22. **where**, wheras, **exacts**, 2nd person sigular. 's' was added to verbs ending with 't'.

24. **loose**, prepared to forgo.

26. **moiety**, A portion.

32. **Turks, and Tartars**, noted for savagery.

33. **to offices**, to do acts.

35. **possess'd**, informed.

38. **danger**, harm.

43. **humour**, whim, caprice; **is it answer'd?** The Duke asks him a question, which bears no relation to law. Since, Shylock stands on law only, he does not answer it. But he chooses to answer it by saying that it is his humour.

46. **baned**, destroyed; poisoned (The word is 'baned and not 'banned').

47. **gaping pig**, a pig prepared for the table.

56. **lodged**, deep seated; **certain**, fixed.

58. **A losing suit**, one that gives him no gain; but only a weight of carrion flesh, if the case were decreed in his favour.

66. **think you question**, remember that you argue with the Jew.

68. **main flood**, high tide; mighty sea.

73. **fretten**, fretted.

78. **conveniency**, proper despatch.

83. **draw**, take, receive.

88. **in abject ..parts**, in mean duties.

100. **Upon**. In accordance with.

111. **wether**, castrated, impotent, worthless.

121. **hangman's**, executioner's.

124. **inExorable**, beyond cursing; no curses will be too great.

125. **for thy life**, for permitting you to live; **accused**, blamed.

127. **Pythagoras**, the Greek philosopher of the 6th century B. C. who first taught the transmigration of souls.

134. **starved**, suffer keenly (with hunger).

138. **cureless**, incurable.



149. **doctor**, a learned man.

171. **rule**, order, regular.

172. **impugn**, oppose.

177. **strain'd**, forced.

179. **blessed**, full of blessing.

192. **in the course of justice**, if law is strictly enforced.

207. **bears down**, crushes; **truth**, honesty.

214. **error**, injustice.

216. **Daniel**, How aptly is the word chosen!

Daniel convicted the Elders 'by their own mouth, and that is what happens to Shylock himself, he is convicted 'by his own mouth', by insisting on the terms of the bond'.

'Daniel' is the same as the Babylonian Belshazzar from which comes the Balthazar.

217. **young**, Daneil too was described as a 'young, youth.'

220. She makes the 'thrice thy money' even before she looks at the bond.

241. **hath full relation to**, fully allows.

268. **speak me fair**, speak kindly of me.

271. **repent not**, do not grieve.

288. **I have a daughter**, The 'dash' at the end indicates that Shylock will not sacrifice like those Christians who think of sacrificing wives. But then he remembers that his daughter has a Christian husband. He wishes that even a cruel Jew "of the stock of Barrabas" would be better than a Christian.

319. **just**, exact.

323. **In the estimation**, by the weight of.

335. **so**, exactly as described her.

344. **contrive**, plot.

354. **rehearsed**, described.

364. **humbleness may drive into a fine**, one half of Shylock's property goes to Antonio and the other half to the State. But the Duke promises that, if he begs for mercy, he (the Duke) may let him off with a fine, instead of taking away entirely what is due to the State.

365. **Ay,...Antonio**, the pardon extended by the Duke in regard to Shylock's property belongs to the half that is due to the State, and not the other half which belongs to Antonio.

368-69. **you take my life...I live**, Poverty is worse than death. "He that taketh away his neighbour's living, slayeth him".

373. **to quit**, to remit; to give back.

375. **in use**, in trust.

374-382. **Both**. Halliwell and Johnson have confused the terms. The terms may be set down thus:

1)  $\frac{1}{2}$  the property belongs to the state, but the Duke is prepared to take only a part of it, if Shylock sue for mercy. Let us say, that he will take only half of it. That means, Shylock will be left with a quarter of his property.

(2) Similarly, Antonio is prepared to remit half of what is due to him on condition that Shylock become a Christian at once. That means that Shylock will be left with another quarter of his property.

(3) That part of the property left with Antonio will be held in trust by him. On the death of Shylock, this will be given to Lorenzo. Meanwhile, of course, Lorenzo receives the income from the trust. (4) But Shylock too must give all that he possessed when he dies to Jessica and Lorenzo. That means Shylock will not have the freedom to dispose of his property at his discretion, for it is likely that out of spite he may do any thing with it rather than allow

his daughter and her husband to enjoy it.

30. **record**, make a deed in writing and sign it.

391. **ten more**, making up a jury of 12. To call the jury' 12 godfathers' it appears, is an old joke.

392. **font**, a vessel for baptismal water.

398. **gratify**, reward.

404. **cope**, "to give as an equivalent for"

411. **know me**, (i) consider this meeting an introduction. (ii) recognise me (Portia may have already mapped a plan)

423. **to give**, by giving this.

539. **hold out**, persist in being.

## SCENE II

6. **advice**, consideration, deliberation.

15 **old**, hard, plenty of.

## ACT. V SCENE I.

The father of Cressida was a Trojan. He deserted Troy and went over to the Greeks who had camped before Troy walls. He left his daughter, Cressida, behind him. She was loved by Troilus, son of Priam, king of Troy. Diomedes succeeded in bringing her out and re-uniting father and daughter. Troilus sighed for her from behind the battlements, while she lived with her father in Grecian tents: (We are concerned with this story only so far. The rest of the story which tells us that she proves unfaithful to Troilus with Diomedes bears no relation to the present context. The stress should be laid on the splendours of

the moon and the passion of lovers. Why unhappy stories are chosen is inexplicable.)

**The story of 'Pyramus and Thisbe':** Thisbe comes by moonlight to the tomb of Ninus, the lovers tryst, where she has agreed to meet Pyramus. She hears the roar of a lion, flies and drops her mantle. The lion, with its mouth full of blood, tears it. Pyramus comes a little later, finds the blood-stained mantle, thinks that she has died, and stabs himself. She comes later, finds him dead and kills herself.

**The story of Dido, Queen of Carthage:** After the fall of Troy, Aeneas went to the court of Dido, who fell in love with him. But he deserted her after a few weeks and sailed away to Italy. She burnt herself on a pyre, for she could not bear the separation.

Dido standing on the shore etc., do not belong to the story.

10. **willow**, a symbol of unhappy love.

11. **waft**, waved her handkerchief both as a token of love and imploration for return.

12-14. **The story of Medea**, She was the wife of Jason. She gathered powerful herbs in moonlight and prepared a potion out of them. With its help and her magical power she resorted youth to Aeson, Jason's father.

15. **steal**, (i) secretly come away (ii) literally stole jewels and ducats.

16. **unthrift**, unthrifty; spend-thrift.

23. **outnight**, tell similar stories which will last beyond the night. **did nobody**, had not some body.

24. **footing**, footseps.

31. **crosses**, wayside crosses.

39. **sola etc**, Launcelot imitates the horn of the 'post' i. e. the messenger in the present case.

47. **his horn**, It had been the custom of 'post' to wear a horn. Perhaps there is a quibble with reference to 'the horn of plenty' Cornucopia (Verity).

48. **expect**, await.

57. **become**, suit, accord with, **touches**, strains.

59. **patens or patines**, small flat dishes.

60. **orb**, celestial body ; sphere.

61. **But**, (negative relative) which does not ; **in his motion**, in its movements through the heaven.

62. **still**, always ; **quiring to**, singing in unison with ; **young-ey'd**, with brightness ever young ; **cherubins**, (sing) Cherub (pl) Chorubin<sup>n</sup> (comes directly from Hebrew) and cherubin<sup>n</sup> (comes through French)

63-65. **Such.....it**, immortal souls only can hear the music of the spheres. Human beings too have souls like cherubin, but so long as they are covered by the body, they cannot hear the celestial music.

63. **harmony**, power to appreciate music.

64. **muddy vesture**, this dress or covering of clay.

65. **close it in**, surrounds.

70. **spirits**, faculties of perception.

72. **race**, hard ; **unhandled**, untrained ; **colts**, young horses.

77. **mutual**, common.

79. **the poet**, Ovid.

80. **drew**, moved them from their places to follow the sound of his golden harp.

81. **naught**, nothing ; **so stockish**, unfeeling.

82. **his**, its.

86. **motions**, impulses : **dull**, drowsy.

87. **Erebus**, Hell.

91. **naughty**, wicked ; worthless.

95. **his state**, the dignity of the substitute.

97. **main of waters**, ocean.

98. **music**, band of musicians.

99. **without respect**, without reference to surroundings. Perfect silence and attentive hearing make music sweeter.)

107. **season**, favourable occasion; **season'd**; modified (for the better).

109. **Peace, ho!**, addressed to the musicians; **Endymion**, a youth of renowned beauty. While he slept on Latmus, even cold Diana's heart was moved to love and, came down and kissed him.

114 **bin**, 'been' without accent.

121. **tucket**, trumpet.

122. **his trumpet**, Each person might have his trumpet-call (Vishnu has *Panchajanyam* and Arujun has *Dhvadattam*.) cf. King Lear: II 4. **Cornwall**, What trumpet's that? **Regan**, I know't my sister's.

127-8 **We should...sun**, Bassanio evidently heard the words of Portia. "We should have daylight at the same time as the people on the opposite side of the globe."

130. **heavy**, heavy of heart, sorrowful.

132. **sort**, dispose of.

136. **in all sense**, (i) in all reason (ii) in every sense of the word.

**breathing courtesy**, courtesy which consists of words only.

145. **hoop**, ring.

146. **posy**, a short motto.

148. **leave**, part with.

154. **respective**, careful.

160. **scrubbed**, stunted; ill-favoured.

170. **leave**, part with (as in line 150).

197. **virtue**, power,

199. **contain**, retain; **held**, regarded, retained, **as a ceremony**, as a sacred possession.

218. **blessed candles of the night**, stars.

230 **advis'd**, cautious.

241. **double**, full of deceit ; two fold.

245. **wealth**, welfare.

246. **which**, 'my body' or the whole affair of the suit.

248. **My soul**, once I pledged my body, for his welfare, now I pledge my *soul* for his good conduct.

249. **advisedly**, deliberately.

271. **living**, possessions.

273. **to road**, to harbour.

283. **And charge us there**, and if you question us there on oath, (as witnesses in a court are).





